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THESIS

**MILITARISM IN MEXICO:
CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY**

by

Jeffrey S. Cole

December, 1997

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Mexican society is becoming militarized due to the increased use of the Mexican military in domestic affairs. This militarization is the result of three factors: the internal focus of the military, the drug war, and corruption. The internal focus of the Mexican military is based on doctrine. Mexico's drug war began in 1986 when U.S. President Reagan convinced their government that the trafficking of drugs constituted a national security threat. Corruption is pervasive in Mexico due to the combination of seven decades of authoritarian rule by the hegemonic Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the associated effects from transnational drug trafficking. The army represents the last publicly respected institution in Mexico. During the past three years, almost the entire law enforcement apparatus to combat drug trafficking has been replaced with military soldiers and numerous key political appointees and governmental positions have been filled with Mexican generals and colonels. There are few national interests more profoundly consequential to the United States than the political stability and general welfare of Mexico. The militarization and changing civil-military relations in Mexico is an important aspect in U.S.-Mexico relations and must be considered in possible policy changes.

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MILITARISM IN MEXICO: CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Mexican society is becoming militarized due to the increased use of the Mexican military in domestic affairs. This militarization is the result of three factors: the internal focus of the military, the drug war, and corruption. The internal focus of the Mexican military is based on doctrine. Mexico's drug war began in 1986 when U.S. President Reagan convinced their government that the trafficking of drugs constituted a national security threat. Corruption is pervasive in Mexico due to the combination of seven decades of authoritarian rule by the hegemonic Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the associated effects from transnational drug trafficking. The army represents the last publicly respected institution in Mexico. During the past three years, almost the entire law enforcement apparatus to combat drug trafficking has been replaced with military soldiers and numerous key political appointees and governmental positions have been filled with Mexican generals and colonels. There are few national interests more profoundly consequential to the United States than the political stability and general welfare of Mexico. The militarization and changing civil-military relations in Mexico is an important aspect in U.S.-Mexico relations and must be considered in possible policy changes.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mexican society is becoming militarized due to the increased use of the Mexican military in domestic affairs. This militarization is the result of three factors: the internal focus of the military, the drug war, and corruption. The internal focus of the Mexican military is based on doctrine, which dates back to the Mexican Revolution and the laws governing the army. Of four National Defense Plans, only the first one delineating the defense of national territory is externally focused. However, the Mexican military focuses the majority of its emphasis and resources on the remaining three defense plans. These plans include defense against internal political threats, nation building civic action programs, and using the military to fight the war on drugs.

The interdiction of illicit narcotics became a "drug war" in 1986 when President Reagan convinced the Mexican government that the trafficking of drugs constituted a national security threat. Corruption is pervasive in Mexico due to the combination of seven decades of authoritarian rule by the hegemonic Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the associated effects from transnational drug trafficking. The army represents the last publicly respected institution in Mexico. During the past three years, almost the entire law enforcement apparatus to combat drug trafficking has been replaced with military soldiers and numerous key political appointees and governmental positions have been filled with Mexican generals and colonels. This thesis examines the current militarization of Mexico in an era of ongoing political reform and liberalization. The United States and Mexico experience an international relationship of complex

interdependence. There are few national interests more profoundly consequential to the United States than the political stability and general welfare of Mexico. Therefore, it is important to study the militarization and changing civil-military relations of our neighbor to the south in order to understand the implications to the United States and to recommend possible policy changes.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PRELUDE

"Mexico's military, a long silent but essential partner in the autocratic political system that has ruled Mexico for nearly seven decades, has assumed an increasingly visible role while the country convulses through its most serious economic and political crises since the 1910 revolution."[1] This statement raises many issues which one may wish to question: What are these visible roles in which the Mexican military is now participating? Are these roles new, and if so, are they part of an intended mission creep? What is the relationship of the Mexican military with the political system?

An even more incisive question as it relates to understanding our neighbor to the south is: Does this increased visibility of the military in Mexican society indicate a growing military influence within that political system? This issue of influence is important because it then helps to determine if this increased military visibility has a stabilizing or destabilizing effect on what has been considered for decades to be one of the most stable countries in Latin America. And, as Professor of National Security Affairs Donald E. Schulz states, "the United States has few foreign policy concerns more

[1] Dudley Althaus, "Mexicans Worried Greater Military Presence Crosses Political Lines," The Houston Chronicle, 28 July 1996, p. A1. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: APOLIT. File: All. 12 August 1996.

profoundly consequential for its national interests – including its security interests – than the political stability and general welfare of Mexico."[2]

It has been argued by numerous pundits that this military influence is the beginning of the militarization of Mexican society. My argument in this thesis is that Mexico is becoming militarized due to the increased use of the Mexican military, primarily the army, in predominantly domestic affairs. This increased use of the military is the result of three factors: the internal focus of the military, the drug war, and corruption.

The first factor, the internal focus of the Mexican military is primarily based on doctrine. This dates back to the Mexican Revolution and the laws governing the army. The Organic Law of 1926 stated that one of the missions of the army was to preserve internal order. The army is currently tasked with four National Defense Plans, of which only the first one delineating the defense of national territory, is externally focused. However, the Mexican army focuses the majority of its emphasis and resources on the remaining three defense plans. They include: defense against internal threats to the government; assistance during times of natural disasters and nation building civic action programs; and the most recent plan, which utilizes the army to fight the war on drugs.

The second factor, the interdiction of illicit narcotics became classified in 1986 as a "drug war" when U.S. President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) linked the trafficking of drugs to communist guerrillas. This was done not only to prevent the spread of communism and the expansion of the "evil empire" as President Reagan called the Soviet

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[2] Donald E. Schulz, Mexico in Crisis (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 31 May 1995), p. iii.

Union, but also to justify the use of United States military in stemming the flow of illicit narcotics entering the country. Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988) followed suit and for the first time in history, publicly acknowledged the drug issue as a national security threat, thereby further involving the Mexican military in internal security matters.

The final factor prompting the increased use of the Mexican military for domestic affairs is corruption. Corruption is pervasive in Mexico due to the combination of seven decades of authoritarian rule by the hegemonic Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI: *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*) and the associated effects from transnational drug trafficking. The army represents the last publicly respected institution in Mexico, and until recently was perceived to be predominantly free of corruption.

Ongoing current events have necessitated this increased use of the army in domestic affairs. These include two guerrilla insurgencies. The first began on New Year's Day 1994, when the Zapatista National Liberation Forces (sometimes referred to by their Spanish initials of EZLN), attacked the state capitol in Chiapas. The second insurgency began during August 1996, when the Popular Revolutionary Army (commonly referred to by their Spanish initials of EPR), conducted coordinated attacks in five central states. Both insurgencies continue to this day. Mexican army troops have been consistently deployed since January 1994 to combat these two threats to political stability. Also, during the past three years, almost the entire law enforcement apparatus to combat drug trafficking has been replaced with military soldiers and numerous key political

appointees and governmental positions have been filled with Mexican generals and colonels.

The relationship between the United States and Mexico is one of complex interdependence which revolves around multiple issues which are intertwined via a network of multiple channels and in which military force is not deemed as appropriate to solve disputes.[3] There are few inter-national interests more profoundly consequential to the United States than the political stability and general welfare of Mexico. Therefore, it is important to study the militarization and changing civil-military relations of our neighbor to the south. It is important to understand the implications of these developments for the United States in order to recommend possible policy changes.

The remainder of this chapter will present the thesis, central argument, its scope, and the methodology to evaluate the thesis statement and to provide policy recommendations. Chapter II will present a brief overview of civil-military relations theory and how it relates to Mexico. Chapter III will describe the Mexican military. Chapter IV presents three categories of indicators that demonstrate the increasing militarization of Mexico. The final chapter will present conclusions and policy recommendations.

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[3] Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Power and Interdependence (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, 1989) presents the international relations theory of complex interdependence with chapter one providing a thorough description of the concept. For a concise summary, see Jorge Chabat, "Mexican Foreign Policy in the 1990s," in Heraldo Muñoz and Joseph S. Tulchin (editors), Latin American Nations in World Politics, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 151-152.

B. THESIS STATEMENT

Mexican society is becoming militarized due to the internal focus of the military; increased participation of its military in the drug war; and the increased use of its military to counteract corruption associated with the drug war and the hegemonic political system. This militarization is changing civil-military relations in Mexico, which could have a negative impact on the ongoing democratic liberalization of Mexico and in turn have national security implications for the United States.

C. SCOPE

This thesis will examine the current use of the military in Mexico relative to an era of ongoing political reform and liberalization. Military doctrine will be examined to determine the prescribed roles and missions of the Mexican military and whether they lead to militarization. Also, the use of the military to combat the drug war and to fill positions vacated due to corruption will be examined for the same purpose.

D. METHODOLOGY

This thesis will present a single case study of the Mexican military, where internally focused doctrine, the drug war, and corruption all contribute to the increased visibility of the military in domestic affairs. It is hypothesized that this increase in militarism has a correspondingly negative influence on the political stability of Mexico.

The Mexican military is becoming more visible because the number of its missions are increasing, and military officers are currently filling more positions in society. This thesis will present evidence to prove this militarization. It has become an everyday occurrence to witness troops patrolling central and southern Mexican towns and establishing road blocks to check for guerrillas and illicit narcotics. Army officers have also recently been appointed to positions of local and national authority. These positions include such postings as the chief of police in Mexico City and also as the commissioner of the now defunct National Institute to Combat Drugs (INCD). Increased visibility has thus resulted due to the increased presence of troops and the citizens' perception of their activities.

Historians and political scientists define militarism in numerous ways. For many it is "the involvement of the military in the political life of the state."[4] For others it entails the government using the military for purposes other than defending the sovereignty of the state against an external hostile force.[5] Yet for others it is simply an over-emphasis of the importance of the military, allowing the military too much autonomy during times of crisis or utilizing the armed forces in non-traditional roles and missions.[6] It is this last interpretation of militarism that will be used in this thesis.

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[4] Carlos Guevara Mann, Panamanian Militarism: A Historical Interpretation (Athens, GA: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1996), p. xv.

[5] See Alain Rouquié, The Military and the State in Latin America, translated by Paul Sigmund (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987).

[6] Augusto Varas, Militarization and the International Arms Race in Latin America (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), p. 27.

The influence of the military upon society will be defined not only as the power to change the course of events, but also the extent to which those events have actually been altered as a result of military intervention. This influence may be initiated by either the direction of the government or by the military itself to circumvent the government. This is the crux of the issue of Mexican political stability as determined by its civil-military relations.

1. Hypothesis Testing Matrix

Table One depicts the thesis statement. In a single case study of the military in Mexico, it demonstrates that the dependent variable of militarism is affected by the three independent variables: internally-focused military doctrine, the drug war, and corruption. The hypothesis is straightforward: an increase in any of the three independent variables will cause a correspondent increase in the dependent variable.

Table 1: Hypothesis Testing Matrix

Case Study	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Mexico	Doctrine	Drug War	Corruption	Militarism

2. Research

The vast majority of material for this thesis was obtained by conducting computer online research utilizing various search engines to locate material on the World Wide Web, Lexis-Nexis, and the United States Department of State-sponsored Foreign Broadcast Information System (FBIS). Due to their search mechanisms and data bases, both Nexis and FBIS provided hundreds of journal and newspaper articles which were read to provide both background and also as cited material. To complement online sources, published books, textbooks and research institution pamphlets were reviewed and cited as needed to complete this study.

E. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although the Mexican government in general and the Mexican military in particular are rather secretive, there have been a number of excellent contributions to the study of the Mexican military, with a major emphasis placed on the army for the obvious reason that it constitutes 75 percent of the total forces. The seminal piece is Edwin Lieuwen's *Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army 1910-1940.*[7] This volume discusses how dictator General Porfirio Díaz transformed numerous regional armed forces into a national army and provides a detailed history of the army as it evolved throughout the 30 years of the revolution. The sequel to that excellent historical piece is the dissertation completed by Stephen Wager, entitled *The Mexican*

[7] Edwin Lieuwen, Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Mexican Army 1910-1940 (Albuquerque, NM: The University of New Mexico Press, 1968).

Army, 1940-1982: The Country Comes First,[8] which extends the previous work by 42 years.

For a knowledgeable description of the personnel composition of the Mexican military, their schooling and career paths, then Wager's contributions to Robert Wesson's *The Latin American Military Institution* is enlightening. Two other volumes that are mandatory for an understanding of the background of the Mexican army are Roderic Camp's *Generals in the Palacio* and David Ronfeldt's *The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment.*

To gain an understanding of how Mexico defines its national security priorities and the related missions that its military performs, then two additional books should be consulted. They include: Bruce Michael Bagley and Sergio Aguayo Quezada's *Mexico: In Search of Security* and John Bailey and Sergio Aguayo Quezada's *Strategy and Security in U.S.-Mexican Relations Beyond the Cold War.*

All authors agree that the modern Mexican military is a product of the revolution and that the revolution is the defining agent for both the government and the military. The military is an anomaly in many ways. In contrast to its Latin American counterparts, the Mexican military has not attempted a coup or intervened in government in over fifty years. It also defies civil-military relations theory in that an autonomous, professionalized force remains apolitical while being co-opted by the hegemonic political party via what Samuel Huntington calls subjective controls. What is not agreed upon is the future role the

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[8] Stephen J. Wager, The Mexican Army, 1940-1982: The Country Comes First Ph.D. Dissertation (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 1992).

military will play in Mexican politics and society, especially following the current era of democratic liberalization.

Compounding the uncertainties of this democratic liberalization which is being instituted by President Zedillo is the simultaneous loss of hegemony by the PRI ruling party. This thesis will demonstrate that the Mexican military is closely tied to the PRI and that the government used the military to sustain the status quo, which for years has provided political stability and relative peace. The fear is that the military will act to ensure the continued existence of this PRI hegemony or worse, that the military will fill the political vacuum if the PRI loses power. Hopefully, by looking at the civil-military relations and history of the Mexican military and government, and then at the increased militarization occurring today, policy makers can speculate how the Mexican military will respond in the future, when it is no longer controlled by the PRI party.

II. THEORY OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

A. PRELUDE

To explain the changing distribution of political power among civilian and military institutions in Mexico, it is useful to look at the extensive literature on traditional patterns of civil-military relations. Existing analyses provide an historical and theoretical perspective of how governments and militaries have shared power peacefully across different types of political regimes (i.e., democracy, communism, totalitarianism, authoritarianism), and why in some cases the military has chosen to intervene while in others it has not. The literature on civil-military relations focuses on three broad areas: the characteristics of the officer corps; assessments of military coup d'etats, military regimes, and militarism; and policy proposals regarding the proper roles and missions for militaries in the post cold war era. While some analyses attempt to offer a fail-safe recipe or tool-box with which to study civil-military relations in numerous countries, this field is an extremely complicated one and remains an inexact science. However, the literature provides an introduction to the subject with which one can analyze contemporary situations and apply to specific countries, such as Mexico.

B. THE OFFICER

Studies of civil-military relations have tended to focus on the officer corps as the unit of analysis, starting with Samuel P. Huntington's seminal piece, *The Soldier and the*

State. In this 1957 book, he states that "The principal focus of civil-military relations is the relation of the officer corps to the state."[9] Huntington develops the concept of the "professional soldier," which has become widely accepted as a fundamental prerequisite for stable civilian control of the military. To explain less stable civilian control, Amos Perlmutter and Valerie Plave Bennett offer two other concepts, the "praetorian soldier" and the "professional revolutionary soldier."[10] Eric Nordlinger takes this analysis one step further by sub-dividing praetorian soldiers into three further categories: the moderator, the guardian, and the ruler.[11] This section looks carefully at these conceptualizations in order to lay the theoretical framework for the empirical analyses that follow in this chapter.

1. The Professional Soldier

A fundamental assumption of this thesis is that variation in the character of the officer corps explains variation in the nature of political participation of officers in their respective political systems. The professional soldier belongs predominately to western culture, to stable political systems with firm civilian control of the military. He has learned to play by the rules and accepts the constraints placed upon his participation in governance by the elected politicians and the legal system. The government is considered legitimate

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[9] Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 3.

[10] Amos Perlmutter and Valerie Plave Bennett, The Political Influence of the Military: A Comparative Reader (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980).

[11] Eric A. Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1977).

and is highly institutionalized. The professional soldier's proclivity is not to intervene in the government but to attempt to influence national security policy via legal channels. A good example of a country with professional soldiers is of course the United States, others include Great Britain and France.

Huntington's prescription for healthy civil-military relations rests upon the concept of professionalism within the officer corps. He states numerous reasons why greater professionalism precludes military intervention into politics. First are the variables of specialization and exclusiveness. Waging war has become highly technical and requires specialized training. The professional soldier who exclusively trains to fight an external aggressor will not have the time or skills to participate in other fields, especially politics. Other considerations in the development of professionalism include scope and attitudes. Professional military officers accept the distinction in role separation between themselves and politicians and are indifferent to participating in politics. Professional military officers therefore confine their activities to the military sphere and readily accept civilian control.[12]

Policy formation in political systems that comprise professional soldiers needs to consider the expertise and knowledge of the officer corps. They are the "managers of violence" in their societies and best know how to wage war and project power. In utilizing the military as an extension of politics to implement foreign policy abroad, the

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[12] For a lucid and succinct synopsis of Huntington's concept of professionalism, see Alfred Stepan, "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion," in Alfred Stepan (editor), Authoritarian Brazil: Origins, Policies, and Future (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 47-50. Unlike Huntington, Stepan argues that the officer can be both professional and politicized (i.e., prone to intervene in politics) at the same time.

elected officials must delineate exact parameters and expectations for their use. Politicians need to respect the prerogatives of the military concerning input for procurement of equipment, requirements for training, promotions, and budget items.

2. The Professional Revolutionary Soldier

Professional revolutionary soldiers are found mostly in countries that have political systems that were forged as an outcome of a political revolution or in countries dominated by a hegemonic party associated with a strong ideology. The obvious examples include Cuba, China, and the Soviet Union; others to consider are Israel and Mexico. The key determinant of professional revolutionary soldiers is their ideological link to the government. In most cases, the government and a new military were formed nearly simultaneously as a result of either revolution or the formation of a new state. The revolutionary mystique or single ideology is the foundation and glue that not only gives substance to both institutions but also bonds them together. These institutions of the military and government are independent but co-equal. They rely on one another to provide legitimacy to each other.

Policy considerations for the newly formed, post-revolutionary government immediately generate tensions. Revolutions do not last forever, eventually the revolutionary mystique will fade and along with it goes the bond between the military and the government. The military may view the government as no longer possessing legitimacy and may be inclined to intervene.

Another policy consideration is the professionalization and depoliticization of the military. Both can lead to animosity of the military towards the civilian government, especially during transitions. As the military is depoliticized it loses its ability to influence policy. The military should be professionalized simultaneously with this loss of political clout but that usually entails modernization, which governments may not be able to afford. A major prerogative of the military is its budget and equipment. Militaries that perceive resources to be inadequate are often inclined to intervene or participate in government until their requests are satisfied.

3. The Praetorian Soldier

Praetorian soldiers are found in highly politicized societies that have poorly institutionalized political systems. The soldiers as well as other organized segments of society are politically motivated to intervene in politics. In these situations, the government is widely perceived as weak and inadequate in its performance of serving its citizens. Perlmutter refers to this as "regime vulnerability."[13] The government loses its legitimacy to run the country and the praetorian soldier feels obligated to intervene.

In his analysis of military coups, Nordlinger sub-divides praetorian soldiers into three categories based upon their level of intervention and extent of their objectives.[14] "Praetorian moderators" are the least ambitious of potential military rulers. They maintain veto power over the civilian government in order to sustain the status quo or balance of

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[13] Perlmutter and Bennett, op. cit., p. 15.

[14] Nordlinger, op. cit., pp. 21-29.

power between the military and civilian elites. "Praetorian guardians" overthrow the civilian government to correct deficiencies with their rule and then return power to civilians, usually after only two to four years. "Praetorian rulers" not only control the government but also dominate the regime and sometimes large sectors of society.

Numerous countries throughout the world, predominately in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, are characterized as praetorian. Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Sumatra, Malaysia, and Egypt have all experienced military intervention of their governments. The military viewed their governments as illegitimate due to being disorganized and unresponsive to the citizenry. The military viewed themselves as cohesive and better suited to govern. Often, the military represented the only sector of society that was capable of ruling effectively.[15] Frequently, the civilians agreed with the military and invited their intervention. Unfortunately, military governments have tended to be repressive and authoritarian. They have attempted to create new governmental structures and ideology which they are not capable of sustaining and/or institutionalizing.[16]

The obvious policy recommendation for these countries is not to allow the military to be involved in politics. Depoliticizing the military and different segments of society as well as establishing clear and strict parameters for military participation in politics and policy formation would be the favored solution. Unfortunately, praetorian militaries arise

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[15]Lucien Pye, "Armies in the Process of Political Modernization," in John J. Johnson (editor), The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962).

[16] Alfred Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

because poorly instituted governments do not have the resolve, capability, or resources to sustain civilian control. Weak states can appeal to the United States or United Nations for recognition and support. Military intervention into politics usually results from a perception of civilian weakness. If external actors bolster the strength of the internal government then the perceived need for military intervention may not prevail. Professional militaries are also less apt to intervene. Applying for external military aid to modernize, educate, and train the military may also retard the possibility of military intervention.

There is not a clear recipe to ensure that the military does not intervene in the government of a given country. Military officers from all countries exert political influence and participate in the formation of policy to some extent. The Western cultural goal is to establish a highly institutionalized political system that both represents and serves its citizenry. An autonomous, professional military is less apt to intervene in a government that is socially cohesive and generally perceived to be legitimate.

C. CIVIL-MILITARY POLITICAL SYSTEMS

The predominant belief in Western culture is that civilian control of both the government and the military is the only acceptable system of governance. However, most political theorists state that all militaries exert political influence. Perlmutter specifically states that "the modern military officer is oriented toward maximizing his influence in politics and/or policy."[17] Therefore, the lesson for leaders of different political systems is

[17] Perlmutter and Bennett, op. cit., p. 5.

to learn how to harness the beneficial influence and expertise of their military elites. This needs to be accomplished without allowing that influence to become pervasive or to create an environment that invites the military to intervene in politics or take over the governance of the country. It also must not create rifts between military and civilian elites so severe that the military cannot defend the country properly.

The relationship between civilian control of the military and government, and military control of the government is not a dichotomous relationship. According to Claude Welch, civilian control is a matter of degree. "A continuum of relationships exists between the power of the military and the power of civilian institutions relative to the enunciation, development, and implementation of policy."[18] Scholars consider civilian control of the government with military input into national security policy formation as the norm. In other instances, civil-military relations is characterized by military participation in civilian led governments and differing varieties of military controlled government.

Military political action can be divided into three broad categories: civilian rule, praetorianism, and military rule.[19] Under civilian rule, military missions may range from strictly external defense to internal support of the government and influence may range from nil to considerable in terms of developing national security policy. However, the key point is that the military is subordinate to the civilian decision makers. A praetorian

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[18] Claude E. Welch, Jr., Civilian Control of the Military: Theory and Cases from Developing Countries (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1976).

[19] Frank L. Wilson, Concepts and Issues in Comparative Politics: An Introduction to Comparative Analysis (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996).

political system is one where the military remains formally out of governance but exerts tremendous influence via veto power, extortion, or threats to intervene. The highest level of military involvement is when the military seizes power and rules the government.

Different scholars provide different theories as to how to ensure civilian control of the military and government. One of the most cited and controversial is Huntington's theory of objective versus subjective civilian control, first introduced in 1957.[20] The normative premise behind objective control is to isolate the military from the political sphere of society by forming an autonomous military sphere. This is accomplished by professionalizing the military and limiting their missions to strictly external defense of the nation. The civilian government must refrain from interfering in internal military affairs and the military must accept subordination to the civilian government and therefore never intervene. In essence, the military is militarized so that government and civilians are not. The end result is that the political power of the military is so severely limited that they are preempted from intervening in government.

Subjective civilian control is the antithesis of objective control. Instead of militarizing the military and having them stand apart from the rest of society, they are civilianized and integrated into society. Subjective control attempts to maximize the political power of the government by marginalizing the influence of other sectors of society, including the military. The goal is to deny the existence of a military entity. Governments using subjective control of their militaries have been criticized for directing

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[20] Huntington, op. cit., pp. 80-85.

the militaries towards internal threats to sustain the status quo of the prevailing government's power base. This politicizes the military and creates the potential for future political intervention.

Morris Janowitz disagrees with Huntington's notion that civil-military relations fall on a bi-polar scale anchored by subjective and objective control. The main difference may be that Huntington attempts to describe ideal types and relationships whereas Janowitz attempts to be more realistic. He sees the pragmatically professional military force acting as a constabulary force, intertwined into civilian society and conducting missions that are both agreeable to the government and socially accepted.[21]

Alfred Stepan updates the concept of professionalism to reflect the actual missions Latin American militaries have conducted since the 1950s. Stepan states that Huntington's theory of "old professionalism" was based on the assumption that armies train to fight wars against external aggressors. However, since Huntington published his theory, most Latin American militaries have been focused to combat an internal threat. This focus on internal threat is the basis for Stepan's theory of "new professionalism."[22]

Under the old concept of a professional military officer, the officers' function was to combat an external aggressor. In contrast, the newly conceptualized professional is

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[21] Morris Janowitz, The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1960). For a contrast and comparison of Janowitz and Huntington, see Peter D. Feaver, "The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control," Armed Forces and Society, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Winter 1996), 149-178.

[22] Stepan, 1973, op. cit., pp. 47-53.

oriented towards an internal security threat, often an insurgency that challenges the legitimacy of the government. Since the threat is politically motivated, the military is forced to educate and train itself to interpret this political threat. This new professionalization results in the officer becoming politicized. Since the original threat was based on a challenge to the legitimacy of the government, it portrays a political system that is perceived to be weakly institutionalized. The new professional military officer, with his newly acquired political skills, may now feel justified to intervene in politics.

Although political scientists continue to debate the civil-military relations' theories of Huntington, Janowitz and Stepan and which is best suited for a particular country, Stepan's theory of new professionalism introduces another concept which will be discussed in the next section. In addition to being focused on internal security, the new professional is also tasked with development of the nation. Stepan states that this inevitably leads to role expansion, which is a concern of governments when assigning roles and missions to their militaries.

D. ROLES AND MISSIONS

Civil-military relations in its simplest form is about the relationship between a government and its military. The relationship will vary depending at what level their agreements and disagreements are found. Fundamentally, all tensions arise from the issue of which institution controls the other. A higher level of concession would be an

agreement as to the amount of influence each institution has upon the other. A higher level yet would be an agreement on a division of labor.

Healthy civil-military relations are enhanced by this division of labor. A professional military accepts its subordination to civilian control and in turn is granted the authority and autonomy by that government to conduct its mission with minimal interference. This appears to be one concept that most theorists agree upon and originates with *On War* by Karl von Clausewitz.[23] He stated that war was an extension of politics and even though military operations were subordinate to political diplomacy they were still the exclusive province of the military.

How governments perceive threats will determine the roles and missions that a given military is tasked to conduct. Roles and missions in turn have a significant impact upon the civil-military relations of the country. Roles and missions delineate military tasks based upon the nature of the threat, whether it is military or non-military, and also from where the threat is originating, either external or internal. Military missions can be identified by reviewing the official doctrine, which has been described as "the software that runs the military hardware."[24]

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[23] Peter D. Feaver, "Civil-Military Conflict and the Use of Force," in Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew (editors), U. S. Civil-Military Relations: In Crisis or Transition? (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995). Feaver cites the great civil-military relations theorists: Clausewitz, Huntington, Claude Welch, Louis Smith and S. E. Finer. Although they disagree on the aspect of civilian control, Feaver presents a good case that they all concur on the concept of division of labor.

[24] Michael C. Desch, "Threat Environments and Military Missions," in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (editors), Civil-Military Relations and Democracy (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 13.

Huntington ties the civil-military political system and roles and missions together. Countries facing an external threat and orienting the missions of their military to confront this threat typically adopt objective control mechanisms and are also most likely to experience healthy civil-military relations. In contrast, governments facing numerous internal threats often have weak political institutions, utilize subjective control measures and may suffer from unhealthy civil-military relations.[25]

The historical and primary external mission for all militaries is to fight wars against an external aggressor force. More modern external missions include international peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention. Internal and non-traditional missions include anti-narcotics operations, counterterrorism, riot control, disaster relief, civic action, and social-welfare operations. All missions other than fighting wars have elicited controversy as to whether they detract from the one primary external mission or the readiness to conduct that mission. A major fear is that internally focused missions tend to politicize the military and open the door to future political intervention.

In numerous developing countries, the military represents the most organized, capable and trusted institution within that country. Often the nation's budget cannot afford to establish supplementary institutions to conduct operations other than war. Confronted with these budgetary constraints, the civilian led government needs to ask three questions: Do these non-traditional missions detract from the military's ability to wage war or readiness to fight war? Does the mission increase the involvement of the

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[25] Ibid., p. 14.

military in domestic politics? Does the mission enhance or detract the consolidation of democracy within that country?[26]

Attempting to apply civil-military relations theory to a particular country is a bit like trying to hit a moving target. This is especially true when the country is Mexico. The next section will briefly describe the civil-military relations of Mexico which combined with the history of the Mexican military in Chapter III will present an accurate picture of how those relations evolved.

E. MEXICAN CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Like many other aspects of politics in Mexico, civil-military relations is an anomaly, when placed in comparative perspective. Atypical for a Latin American country, civilians dominate politics and there hasn't been a coup since 1920. The military is considered autonomous regarding its education, training, and promotion, and is also perceived as secretive. The official doctrine for the military emphasizes internal missions and the government maintains strict civilian dominance utilizing subjective control mechanisms. Yet, most importantly, the military officer in Mexico is considered extremely professional.[27]

It is this professionalism which is most often cited as the explanation for why the Mexican army has not intervened in the government for the past seventy years. Scholars

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[26] Louis W. Goodman, "Military Role Past and Present," in Diamond and Plattner, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

[27] William S. Ackroyd, "Military Professionalism, Education, and Political Behavior in Mexico," Armed Forces and Society, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Fall 1991), p. 81.

argue that the Mexican officer has considered his highly institutionalized government as legitimate and has been willing to play by the rules and accepts the constraints placed upon his political participation by that government.[28] The dominant belief has been that the nation is more important than the individual and that civilians are above the military. This degree of professionalization has ensured that the fear of military intervention in Mexican politics was minimized due to the general acceptance of civilian control of the military.

Where the Mexican military deviates from Huntington's description of professional soldiers is its mission orientation. Rather than being specialized in waging war against an external aggressor and exclusively training to conduct war fighting, it is focused on internal political threats and is tasked with law enforcement, bureaucratic administration, social work, and nation building development projects. This internal orientation violates Huntington's theory of objective control. Observers of Mexican politics fear that this increased military presence in civil society will allow the Mexican military an inroad to intervene in politics.

As the next chapter will describe, the origin of the modern Mexican military was the revolution. The revolution produced an officer who could have been classified as what scholars would label a "professional revolutionary soldier" with an ideological tie to the emergent government. The chapter will then explain how the political leaders using co-optation and political party-building were able to successfully depoliticize the officer corps and convert those revolutionary soldiers into professional soldiers.

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[28] Ibid. See also Roderic A. Camp, Generals in the Palacio: The Military in Modern Mexico. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

III. THE HISTORY OF THE MEXICAN MILITARY

A. PRELUDE

Having just outlined the prevailing theories of civil-military relations and a brief description of the Mexican situation, this chapter will present more thoroughly the history of the Mexican military as it has evolved since the revolution. Before a narrative of this history, it is important to describe the political atmosphere in which the military operates in Mexico.

B. CURRENT POLITICAL SETTING

Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully classify Mexico as a hegemonic system in which a single party is in total control, and sustains that control via unfair elections. In their description of political party systems, they state that Mexico is somewhere between institutionalized and inchoate.[29] The editors also describe the different types of political parties and their importance in different Latin American countries. A political party system allows for competition and patterned interaction between different parties. An institutionalized party system exists when the processes or organizations become well established and widely known, if not universally accepted. Four conditions must be

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[29]Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," in Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully (editors), Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 1-28.

satisfied for a party system to be institutionalized: there must be stability in the rules, the major parties must have somewhat stable roots in society, major political actors must accord legitimacy to the electoral system by adhering to the outcome of sanctioned elections, and finally, party organizations must have an identity of their own and not be subordinate to individual persons. Inchoate refers to a weakly institutionalized party system that hasn't completely satisfied the above four conditions.

Three other well known Latin Americanists classify Mexico slightly higher on the democracy continuum. Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset state that Mexico has historically been hegemonic but due to recent political reforms during the past two presidential terms, they now call Mexico semi-democratic.[30] According to the three authors, a semi-democracy either restricts party competition or elections are so unfair that electoral outcomes do not produce true popular sovereignty and accountability. Either way, none of these five experts would pronounce Mexico to be an unqualifiedly democratic system, even though the current regime was designed with that intent.

The Mexican Constitution of 1917 that was developed during the Mexican Revolution prescribed a presidential system of government. In theory, the government is composed of three autonomous branches: the executive, a bicameral federal legislature, and a judiciary. Patterned after the United States constitution, it empowers each branch with the capacity to check and balance the others. In reality, Mexico has an authoritarian

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[30] Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Introduction: What Makes for Democracy?" in Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset (editors), Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1995), pp. 7-8.

system characterized by a highly centralized state with a strong presidency that dominates the system at all levels.[31] The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI: *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*), having undergone a couple of name changes, has won every presidential election since it was first created in 1929. The party has been controlled by the country's president during every *sexenio* (six year elected presidential term) up until the most recent presidential election held in 1994. The party receives funding from the government and for the majority of the past seven decades, it has been extremely difficult to distinguish any separation between this political party and government. This lack of separation is so evident that Mexican journalists equate the party with the state in the word *Pri-gobierno* (the PRI/government).[32] This single party dominated political system is a classic example of a hegemonic party system as defined by Mainwaring and Scully.

The PRI has never lost a national election and until 1989 when the governorship of Baja California state was won by the National Action Party (PAN: *Partido de Accion Nacional*), it had never lost a local election. Nearly every national and local election held in Mexico during the 1980s and 1990s has been considered fraudulent, with reported destruction of thousands of ballots for PRI opponents, early closing of polls, improperly color-coded ballots for illiterate voters, and the ongoing custom of incumbent presidents

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[31] Ann L. Craig and Wayne A. Cornelius, "Houses Divided: Parties and Political Reform in Mexico," in Mainwaring and Scully, op. cit., p. 251. See also Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968).

[32] Christopher Caldwell, "Dinosaurs and Desperados," The American Spectator. May 1995. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Mags. 12 August 1996.

selecting their successor.[33] Reelection to consecutive terms is prohibited by the constitution. As tainted as this government is, this monopoly of power is sometimes considered a valuable asset. PRI supporters compare Mexico to the rest of Latin America with its sordid history of coups and military governments. The Mexican system even with all of its faults, they state, has at least guaranteed stability.[34]

Mexico's post-revolutionary political stability is in great part due to the loyal behavior of the military. Ever since the creation of the PRI, the military has remained under civilian control. This subordination of the military to the politicians has helped to strengthen the ruling party.[35] One reason for the close tie between the military and the government is that both were developed as a result of the revolution and therefore share a similar ideological foundation.

C. CREATION OF A NATIONAL ARMY

Historically, a national army in Mexico dates back to the 15th century and the Aztec warriors. Prior to the arrival of Columbus to the New World, the Triple Alliance formed by three Aztec city states was able to field an army of 18,000 troops. However, these forces were easily decimated by the Spanish conquistador, Hernán Cortés, and his

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[33] Andres Oppenheimer, Bordering on Chaos: Guerrillas, Stockbrokers, Politicians, and Mexico's Road to Prosperity (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1996).

[34] Martin Langerfield, "One Party Rule Weakens Mexico's Claim to Democracy," Reuters North American Wire. 14 November 1993. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: TXTLNE. 12 August 1996.

[35] "The Mexican Army and Political Crisis," Swiss Review of World Affairs. 1 March 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Mags. 12 August 1996.

outnumbered troops due to their use of firearms, shock troops mounted on horseback, and the introduction of new diseases from Europe. Military remnants from 300 years of Spanish domination include the adoption of Spanish military ranks, prestige associated with cavalry units, and a sharp division between officers and enlisted personnel.[36]

The army during the years of independence was a compilation of numerous, regional forces led by powerful, charismatic leaders known as *caudillos*. General Porfirio Díaz, who led Mexico as a dictator from 1876 until 1911, is credited with reining in all of the provincial military chieftains and uniting them into one national army under the command of the central government. It took him nearly fifteen years to accomplish this task. Those chieftains that were weaker were defeated in battle, some were subjected to corruption and were paid large salaries, while others were either promoted to political positions or sent overseas as military attaches. In all, Díaz was able to remove or subjugate over five hundred officers, including twenty-five of one hundred generals.[37]

Díaz was a ruthless dictator, who provided few benefits to his countrymen. He used the army to maintain internal peace rather than as a deterrent to external aggressors. The military provided the stability to promote economic growth, and in turn, that growth provided the funding to maintain the army. To professionalize the army, and consequently remove it from the political arena, the army was reduced in size from between sixty thousand to ninety thousand down to fewer than thirty thousand. The government also

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[36] Phyllis Greene Walker, "National Security," in James D. Rudolph (editor), Mexico: A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985), p. 319.

[37] Lieuwen, op. cit., pp. 1-3.

purchased the army new equipment consisting of used rifles and cannons from France, Germany, and the United States. The Chapultepec Military Academy was founded during the 1880s to turn men from good families into presentable, professional officers.

Although the Mexican army appeared well organized to the outside observer at the turn of the century, it actually contained serious faults. The curriculum at the academy stressed foreign languages and European battle strategy, subjects not needed for an internally focused military of an underdeveloped nation. Of even greater concern, this ill directed education was only possessed by the younger officers. The generals were mostly old, uneducated, and nonprofessional soldiers, many of whom were corrupt. Most importantly, the composition of the army consisted of nearly nine thousand officers and only eighteen thousand troops, most of whom were vagrants, beggars, or criminals.[38]

In 1910, after Díaz had once again declared himself the victor in a fraudulent presidential election, Francisco Madero, his opponent, created the Army of Liberation. In the spring of 1911, Madero's forces were joined by others led by regional strongmen such as Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. Upon the resignation of Díaz in May 1911, many of the soldiers from the Liberation Army joined the *federales* of the National Army, which was led by General Victoriano Huerta. However, once Madero assumed the presidency (1911-1913), he failed to implement the social reform desired by both Zapata and Villa. These regional forces therefore continued the military phase of the Mexican Revolution for the next seven years.[39]

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[38] Ibid., pp. 3-6.

[39] Elizabeth de Lima-Dantes, "Historical Setting," in Rudolph, op. cit., pp. 47-51.

During this time frame, Venustiano Carranza, leader of the Northern faction, called the military leaders of the other factions to a constitutional convention to draft a new supreme law for the Republic of Mexico. The resultant Constitution of 1917 is the bedrock of both the current Mexican government and military. It provided both with legitimacy and a common ideology. From this revolution and constitution a single national army emerged.

Stephen Wager, one of leading experts on the Mexican army, argues in his dissertation that the primary reason that the army has remained apolitical in Mexico is due to the ideology that developed during the revolution. This ideology is composed of six elements: revolutionary heritage, institutional loyalty, discipline, patriotism, nationalism, and apoliticism.[40] To this day, the military academy is the primary method of institutionalizing professionalism and ideology in officers in Mexico. The process has two functions: to inculcate norms and values and also to teach necessary military skills while restricting political knowledge.[41] These ideals are then reinforced throughout the officers' careers at subsequent senior war colleges. The end result is that Mexican officers view themselves as guardians of the revolution, which eschews military intervention in politics in favor of assisting the nation develop.

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[40] Wager, op. cit.

[41] Ackroyd, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

D. POST-REVOLUTION PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE ARMY

During the warring years, as a result of combining regional forces with the remnants of the national army, the total forces numbered over two hundred thousand with fifty thousand officers of which some five hundred claimed to be generals. President-elect Carranza (1917-1920) assigned the task of dissolving the Constitutionalist Army and creating a smaller national army to his Minister of War, General Alvaro Obregón. He created the Legion of Honor of the National Army, which allowed officers to retain their rank and still receive full pay for volunteering to remove themselves from active duty. Those that did not leave voluntarily were reviewed and many were sent to the reserves at half pay.[42]

Due to disagreements with Carranza, Obregón himself resigned and returned to civilian life. Carranza continued to reorganize the military but made little effect. Most telling of his failed progress was the military budget. Before Carranza assumed office, the army received 31 percent of the government's budget. During the first year of his presidency, the army received an all time high of 72 percent of the national budget. In the last three years of his term the army received an average of 65 percent of the budget each year.[43]

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[42] Lieuwen, op. cit., p. 45.

[43] Ibid., p. 153.

Obregón (1920-1924) succeeded Carranza as president and immediately set out to reorganize and professionalize the military. He further reduced the now one hundred thousand man army by 50 percent and reduced its share of the national budget to 36 percent.[44] He revamped the curriculum at the War College and sent promising young officers overseas to learn modern military techniques. He had regulation uniforms issued to all troops and required that they wear them. Finally, to help depoliticize the military, he forbade all members from participating in any political activity and kept them busy by assigning them to conduct civic action, such as repairing railroads and constructing roads and irrigation systems. Civic action became the mainstay of the Mexican army and also provided a means for the military to satisfy their revolutionary commitments by helping to develop the economic well being of the country.

As is common in Mexico, Obregón hand-picked his successor. General Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-1928) continued his predecessor's efforts to depoliticize the military and gain control of the government. Calles purged the army of numerous politically aspirant generals, thus enhancing the power of the president at the expense of the generals. Calles should also be given credit for changes made to the military due his selection of General Joaquín Amaro as his Minister of War. A hero from the Revolution, Amaro further reduced the military budget by placing a moratorium on promotions and reducing the number of soldiers on active duty. He was a stern disciplinarian and this in turn enhanced the pride and performance of his service. He saw the military as the defender of

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[44] Ibid., and also Wager, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

the people and set out to create a military education system that would take a common citizen and turn him into a professional officer. Due to his dedicated work on the school system and the laws governing the military, he is considered the architect of the modern Mexican military.[45]

After leaving office in 1929, President Calles founded the Party of the National Revolution (PNR: *Partido Nacional Revolucionario*), a political party that co-opted different segments of Mexican society into a corporatist state. The military was purposely omitted from the party since Calles thought the political sectors of labor, peasants, and bureaucrats would offset their influence. This was referred to by Huntington as "the most striking example of political institution building by generals."[46] During this period there was little distinction between the government and the military. Every president since Porfirio Díaz, who began his reign in 1876, until 1946 ascended the Army's ladder to the rank of General prior to assuming the presidency.[47]

President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), himself previously an army general, reorganized the ruling party in 1938 as the Party of the Mexican Revolution (PRM: *Partido de la Revolución Mexicana*), and incorporated the military as the fourth pillar.[48] "Thus, paradoxically, the military were politicized in order to demilitarize politics and to

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[45] Wager, op. cit., pp. 135-148.

[46] Huntington, 1968, op. cit., p. 255.

[47] "The Mexican Army and Political Crisis," op. cit.

[48] Craig and Cornelius, op. cit., p.253.

neutralize the military by involving them politically in a subordinate way."[49] The influence of the military was severely diminished considering that the military only constituted 55,000 of 3.8 million party members. This securely placed the military under the control of the civilian led government.

For the next two years the military was still officially recognized as a corporate pillar of the party, but in 1940 its pillar status was eliminated, although many argue that it remains a silent partner until this day. It was at this time that the civilian controlled government, in order to further distance the army from the political arena, incorporated strict military doctrine to establish parameters on their missions. Doctrine will be thoroughly analyzed as one of the independent variables in Chapter IV.

The modern Mexican military that exists today was thus fundamentally formed during the twenty year period following the revolution. Due to the leadership of successive generals turned president, the military became smaller, more tightly controlled, educated, and professionalized. This resulted in the acceptance of civilian control of the military which enabled civilians to become presidents without prior military service. The fact that Presidents Calles and Cárdenas, both having previously obtained the rank of general, were responsible for creating the political party that today is the PRI also is considered as a cause for the special relationship that exists between the ruling party and

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[49] Alain Rouquié, The Military and the State in Latin America. Translated by Paul E. Sigmund. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), p. 204.

the military. Some observers of Mexican civil-military relations have even referred to the military as the "armed wing of the government."[50]

E. THE MODERN MEXICAN MILITARY

1. Organizational Structure

The modern Mexican military is divided into the Secretariat of National Defense, which controls both the army and the air force, and the Secretariat of the Navy. Ministers for both secretariats (SECDEF and SECNAV) are active duty, uniformed flag officers who are members of the president's cabinet. Due to the Mexican characteristic of *personalismo*, where personal loyalty and relationships are more important than competence, each new president personally selects his two ministers, who in turn select zone commanders that are considered loyal to them and the president. All senior officers then select their staffs and subordinate commanders. This means of selecting officers for key positions is similar to the *camarilla* system in Mexican politics.[51] Decision making throughout the military is highly centralized and command follows a rigid hierarchy.[52]

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[50] See Mónica Serrano, "The Armed Branch of the State: Civil-Military Relations in Mexico," Journal of Latin American Studies, Vol. 27, Part 2 (May 1991), 423-448.

[51] Throughout the previous three to four decades, Mexico's ruling class has been divided into *camarillas*, or clans. Somewhat similar to a mafia family in the sense of a leading patron and following protégés, they were originally formed due to ideological allegiances but more recently have remained united due to joint businesses and to sustain political clout. See Oppenheimer, op. cit., p. 79. See also, Wayne A. Cornelius, Mexican Politics in Transition - The Breakdown of a One-Party Dominant Regime. Monograph Series, No. 41. (San Diego, CA: University of California-San Diego Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, 1996).

[52] Wager, op. cit., p. 57.

The army is composed primarily of two types of combat units: infantry and cavalry. During the modernization that took place during the 1970s most cavalry units replaced their horses with motorized vehicles. Rather than being organized by combat divisions as is the United States, the Mexican army allocates their forces according to geographical zones.

In 1988, Mexico was divided into thirty-five zones. Today, Mexico has thirty-nine military zones; one for each of the thirty-one states plus the Federal District. States that are either geographically larger or more strategically significant, such as Guerrero with the EPR insurgency and Tabasco with its wealth of natural resources, are subdivided into two zones. Chiapas with the ongoing Zapatista insurgency has gone from one zone in the early 1990s to three zones in 1997. This is a clear indicator of the ongoing militarization of that state. Administratively, the zones are grouped into twelve military regions, with the senior zone commander in each region acting as the regional commander. The navy is similarly subdivided into seventeen naval zones, one for each coastal state; eleven on the Pacific coast and six in the Gulf of Mexico. The air force is dispersed among various airfields throughout the country with the majority of personnel and aircraft being in close proximity to the capital city.

Zone commanders are selected by the SECDEF and SECNAV in close coordination with the president. All forces in their geographical area fall under their purview, including the reserves and Rural Defense Corps. Duties as the senior military commander include maintaining the political stability in their area and also conducting the

civic action projects. The zone commanders provide a direct intelligence link between the states and the central government and provide a feedback mechanism for the populace to communicate to the government. They play a prominent role, both socially and politically, in governing the state. Many times during the past seventy years during periods of political instability, zone commanders have replaced the elected governors by order of the president.[53] Zone commanders are rotated to different geographical areas, usually every three years, to prevent them and their staff from developing too strong political connections in a particular area, and thereby possibly presenting an internal threat to national political stability.

2. Personnel

As Table Two shows and according to published sources, total active forces include approximately 175,000 personnel. Of this number, 130,000 are in the army, 37,000 in the navy, and 8,000 in the air force.[54] The army also has 300,000 reservists and another 14,000 paramilitary members as part of the Rural Defense Corps.[55] Numerous

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[53] Roderic A. Camp, "Generals and Politicians in Mexico: A Preliminary Comparison," in David Ronfeldt (editor), The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment (San Diego, CA: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California San Diego, 1984), pp. 144-145.

[54] The International Institute for Strategic Studies (hereafter, IISS), The Military Balance 1996/97 (London: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 226-227.

[55] The reserves are separated into the first and second reserves, using the age limit of 30 as the distinguishing factor. Most become reservists by first initially serving in the National Military Service (NMS). The NMS is composed of male soldiers above the age of 18 who are conscripted by a lottery system and then train every Sunday for a year. Upon completion of training they become members of the first reserve. Since 1940, the reserves have never been activated. The Rural Defense Corps (RDC) dates back to the days of the revolution and were created to protect community run farms called *ejidos*. The RDC are

Mexican journalists report that actual active duty forces may number as many as 235,000, but this has not been confirmed by either the Mexican government or published sources.[56] The biggest increases allegedly began in 1994, soon after the Zapastista uprising. Another reason for the unannounced buildup is to provide more troops to combat the drug war and corruption, as will be discussed in Chapter IV.

Table 2: Size of the Mexican Military in Proportion to Population

Year	Personnel	Population (mil)	Ratio (per 1,000)
1940	50,000	19.6	2.55
1950	50,000	25.7	1.95
1960	55,000	34.2	1.61
1970	64,000	52.0	1.23
1980	100,000	69.2	1.45
1990	141,500	84.3	1.68
1995	175,000	92.2	1.90

Source: Wager, 1992, Ph.D. dissertation and IISS, The Military Balance[57]

Active duty members are volunteers who serve a three year enlistment in the same geographical area in which their family resides and where they entered the service. The

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issued rifles from the army but receive no other pay or compensation. An active duty army officer is assigned to organize and train these local units. Operationally, both the NMS and the RDC report to the zone commander. See Stephen J. Wager, "Mexico," in Robert Wesson (editor), The Latin American Military Institution (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1986), pp. 1-70.

[56] Mark Fineman, "Analysts Troubled by Growing Military Presence," The News, 11 February 1997. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Allwld. 26 August 1997.

[57] Wager, 1992, op. cit., p. 45. See also IISS, The Military Balance. (London: Oxford University Press, multiple editions), 1979-80: pp. 80-81; 1989-90: p. 196; 1995-96: p. 226.

majority of enlisted personnel come from lower class neighborhoods and join the military as a means to gain upward social movement. Those that reenlist usually become non-commissioned officers (NCO), are called sergeants and remain on active duty until eligible to retire.

Officer candidates come from mostly middle class families and also join the military to move up socially. Acceptance into one of the service academies ensures a four year college education, a secure career with good pay, and fringe benefits. About 95 percent of all officers begin as cadets at one of the service academies. The remaining 5 percent come from superior performing NCO's who have been sent to the War College for a special one year program. Officers with the potential to get promoted beyond Major are sent to the Superior War College (ESG: *Escuela Superior de Guerra*) for three years sometime during their first ten years of active duty and are designated as general staff officers (DEM: *diplomados de estado mayor*). Those graduates then compete for selection to the National War College (*Colegio de Defensa*), which is a stepping stone to making General. The National War College is the first point in an officer's career where they are authorized to study political topics and national security policy.[58]

3. The Defense Budget

Similar to civil-military relations in Mexico, the defense budget and its relation to the country's socio-economic status is a list of seemingly inconsistent facts. One of the most obvious inconsistencies is the change in defense spending, especially in comparison

[58] Wager, 1986, op. cit.

with the total governmental budget for Mexico. According to historian E. Bradford Burns, prior to the revolution, as the most institutionalized sector of Mexican society, the army actually consumed a greater share of the national budget than did the rest of the government during the reign of General Porfirio Díaz.[59] In 1914, at the beginning of the Revolution, the army's budget was 44 million pesos, which represented 31 percent of the 141 million peso governmental budget. Three years later during the peak of fighting between Carranza's National Army and the forces mounted by Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, the army's budget consumed 72 percent of the total budget. Five years later, in 1922 when the military phase of the Revolution was complete, the army's budget was 41 percent of the total governmental budget and steadily decreased a couple of percentage points every year for the next thirty years. By the mid 1950s, the military budget (the navy was included in 1944) represented less than 10 percent of the national government's annual budget.[60] The declining budget of the 1940s and early 1950s is a pretty clear indication of the demilitarization of Mexican politics and the de-emphasis of the military during this time frame.

Just as it is difficult to find accurate numbers of military personnel, it is just as hard to find accurate data on Mexican defense expenditures. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, which annually publishes data on all militaries of the world, specifically lists Mexico as one of the most secretive countries. It states that Mexico spent 16.6

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[59] E. Bradford Burns, Latin America: A Concise Interpretive History 6th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994), p. 117.

[60] Lieuwen, op. cit., pp. 141-153.

billion new pesos (US$ 3.0 billion) on defense in 1996. This represents 0.6 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Although Mexico spends a relatively small amount of its GDP on defense, what is more revealing, as Table Three indicates, is the obvious increases in defense spending.

Table 3: Mexican Defense Expenditures

Year	Defense Expenditures (in United States dollars)
1979	0.52 billion
1986	0.61 billion
1989	0.67 billion
1990	0.71 billion
1992	1.52 billion
1993	1.50 billion
1994	2.30 billion
1995	2.70 billion
1996	3.00 billion

Source: IISS, The Military Balance: 1979-1996

What is not revealed in Table Three is that in 1993, Mexico only allocated US$ 1.6 billion to the 1994 defense budget, but actual defense expenditures amounted to US $2.3 billion. This increase in spending corresponds to the military mobilization to combat the Zapatista insurgency in the state of Chiapas. The other obvious increase in defense spending is the jump from US$ 0.71 billion in 1990 to US$ 1.52 billion in 1992. This dramatic increase corresponds to the militarization of the "drug war."[61]

Although this chapter has been primarily descriptive in content, there are some major points that definitely indicate the growing militarization of Mexico. The increase in

[61] The Military Balance 1996/97, op. cit.

the number of military zones is indicative of the administrative and operational burden placed upon the government of Mexico to combat the two ongoing guerrilla insurgencies. Creating new commands, building installations and shifting military assets does provide evidence that Mexico is militarizing particular states and "hot spots." Also, using the zone commanders to replace elected officials and as an intelligence link back to the central government reveals why some refer to the military as the "armed wing of the government."

Although the huge military personnel increases reported by some of the Mexican journalists has not been substantiated by official governmental reports, the overall trend of the size of the military as shown in Table Two indicates an increase irrelative to population growth. Just looking at the data from 1979 until 1995 shows that the population did not even double, however the number of military personnel nearly tripled. Finally, the huge increase in the defense budget clearly indicates the emphasis that the Mexican government has placed on combating both the "drug war" and the two guerrilla insurgencies. The next chapter will address specifically the indicators of this increased militarization of Mexico.

IV. INDICATORS OF THE INCREASING MILITARIZATION OF MEXICO

A. PRELUDE

As introduced in the first chapter, the hypothesis of this thesis is that Mexico is becoming increasingly militarized. This militarization is due to the expanded roles of the military in accordance with an internally focused doctrine, the escalation of the "drug war," and increases in political corruption. This chapter will present evidence to substantiate these claiams. As argued in the thesis statement, an increase in militarization alters the civil-military relations between the government and military in Mexico. How that changing relationship may affect the ongoing democratic liberalization will be analyzed in the concluding chapter.

B. DOCTRINAL FOCUS

The constitution of 1917 provides for a national army and clearly states that the president is the civilian commander in chief with strong executive power to control the actions of the military.[62] During the presidential term of Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-1928), Minister of War General Amaro founded the Technical Commission to rewrite the laws governing the military. The Organic Law of 1926 provides the military's legal raison

[62] Wager, 1992, op. cit., p. 370.

d'être, stating that the mission of the army is "to defend the integrity and independence of the fatherland, to maintain the rule of the constitution and its laws, and to conserve internal order."[63]

The law was modified in 1971, eliminating the mission of defense of the constitution and adding the missions of assisting during times of natural emergencies and contributing to the growth of the nation via social projects. This modification in effect legalized civic action which the military had been doing ever since the revolution. A final modification in 1986 clarified the 1971 changes by "subdividing it into three separate tasks: (1) providing aid to the civilian population in public emergencies, (2) performing civic action and social works contributing to national progress, and (3) in the case of natural disasters, helping in the maintenance of public order and providing support to the affected population and its property."[64]

Today the Mexican military conducts operations under the rubric of four National Defense Plans that loosely correspond to the missions outlined by the Organic Law.[65] National Defense Plan One (DN-1) requires the use of the army in defense of national territory against the invasion from a foreign, hostile force. This plan correlates to the

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[63] *Ley Organica del Ejercito y Armada Nacionales*, 15 March 1926, as cited by Stephen J. Wager, "The Mexican Military Approaches the 21st Century: Coping with a New World Order," in Donald E. Schulz and Edward J. Williams (editors), Mexico Faces the 21st Century (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), p. 59.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Julio Montes, Jane's Intelligence Review. 1 February 1995. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: MILTRY. File: Jandef. 12 August 1996.

mission of defending the integrity and independence of the fatherland, as listed in the Organic Law.

Due to Mexico's geographical placement between militarily insignificant Guatemala to the south and the superpower United States to the north, this defense plan does not receive much emphasis. Looking at the organizational structure of the army; geographical zones as opposed to combat divisions, and the equipment, armored personnel carriers as opposed to tanks; it is obvious that the Mexican army is more concerned with protecting internal stability than with defending the nation from another country's military. This may also be motivated by the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) of 1947, which joined twenty Latin American countries with the United States in a formal mutual security alliance. This security umbrella in essence guarantees that the United States will provide protection against extra-hemispheric foreign invasion to all of its Western Hemisphere neighbors.[66] Although not a signatory to the treaty, it is speculated that Mexico expects its neighbor to the north to come to its defense if ever attacked by an external aggressor.

National Defense Plan Two (DN-2) requires the use of the military to defend the nation against internal threats. Mexico is currently experiencing two ongoing insurgencies by armed guerrillas that threaten its internal political stability. The first group is the Zapatista Army, which only operates in Chiapas state, and the second group is the newer Popular Revolutionary Army, which has staged attacks in numerous central and southern

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[66] G. Pope Atkins, Latin America in the International Political System, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), p. 40.

states. Both uprisings have caused the military to deploy away from their garrisons and conduct sustained missions in an attempt to subdue the rebels.

To bring in the New Year of 1994, a rebel group of poor farmers armed with old rifles and machetes from the state of Chiapas, calling themselves the Zapatista National Liberation Army (occasionally referred to by their Spanish initials of EZLN), declared war on the government. They captured towns centered around and including the state capital of San Cristóbal de las Casas. Their masked leader, Sub-Commander Marcos, went public with their "Declaration of War" to request agrarian reform and demand jobs, housing, health care, and education for the impoverished indigenous Indians. The government under President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994) responded with military force. The army deployed with armored personnel carriers and infantry to force the guerrillas from the towns they now occupied. However, the army also came under attack by the national and foreign press for alleged human rights violations which included bombing civilian areas, summary executions, and torture.[67] Thousands of anti-war protesters demonstrated in Mexico City and twelve days later the government declared a cease fire in order to initiate peace talks. Before the month ended, in an attempt to reduce public support for the rebels, the government announced US$ 250 million in infrastructure projects to pacify the people living in Chiapas.

What should be noted is the Zapatistas' willingness to lay down their weapons in order to conduct peace talks. It is evident that they want to change politics and initiate

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[67] Lucy Conger, "Mexico: Zapatista Thunder," Current History, Vol. 93, No. 581 (1994), p. 115.

reform, but they do not want to overthrow the government. For this willingness to work with the current ruling government, Juan Linz would define the Zapatista movement as a "semi-loyal opposition."[68] By the end of February 1994, the government envoy and the Zapatista leaders had agreed to enact governmental reforms in Chiapas.

Unfortunately, a lasting agreement was not achieved. Rebel uprisings continued to occur and the army maintained an occupation of Chiapas. Soon after assuming the presidency on December 1, 1994, President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León (1994-2000) twice used the troops as a show of force, presumably to divert attention away from the economic problems that he inherited from Salinas. In December 1994, hundreds of troops rolled into the small town of San Andrés Larrainzar, which the rebels had occupied a week earlier.[69] Then in February 1995, after having suffered massive criticism in the world press for the peso bail-out, President Zedillo, citing the discovery of two weapons caches, once again sent the troops into the depths of the Lacandón jungle and surrounding hillsides.

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[68] Linz states that in order for a specific government to survive it must be considered legitimate by its citizens. He states that legitimacy is a belief that the current political system is the best type for that nation at that time and that the people are willing to accept both the laws that they agree with and also those that they do not. Those citizens that believe in this legitimacy and are willing to work within the system to install opposition leaders are termed "loyal opposition." A "semi-loyal opposition" believes in the political system but is willing to take actions beyond peaceful, lawful politics as a means to justify its desired end result of obtaining its demands or installing its leaders. A "disloyal opposition" rejects the legitimacy of the current government and is willing to take any actions it deems necessary to obtain its demands. See Juan L. Linz, The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 16-33.

[69] "Mexican Army in Show of Force in Chiapas," Deusche Presse-Agentur, 22 December 1994. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: TXTLNE. 12 August 1996.

Although the government chose to call this troop deployment a success, once again under pressure from critics, the government was forced to recall the troops. While in Chiapas, the army soldiers were tasked to perform public service tasks such as digging ditches, distributing food, and giving haircuts and free medical check-ups. This was done to enhance the popular support presumably developed by the infrastructure money allocated by the government.[70] To this day the Zapatista crisis continues to linger, with negotiations stalling and the continued presence of forty thousand army troops (one third of the active force) deployed and patrolling in Chiapas.

The Mexican newspapers report daily on the rising significance of Chiapas. The government refers to the state as a "hot spot" and military presence and building continues. The state is now divided into three military zones and national defense secretary General Enrique Cervantes Aguirre has visited the state numerous times in 1997 to witness the construction of four new military bases. In addition to the increased presence, the army has also changed its tactics. It now travels by day and enters into small communities to question and harass local peasants to obtain information leading to the whereabouts of the insurgents.[71]

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[70] "Mexico; Hard Line, Hard Landing," The Economist. 18 February 1995. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Mags. 12 August 1996.

[71] See three different articles in Mexico City's newspaper La Jornada, "Four New Army Camps Planned for Chiapas," 14 April 1997 and "Defense Secretary Travels to Chiapas," 13 June 1997, both by Elio Henríquez and also, Angeles Mariscal, "Las Canadas Military Buildup," 13 June 1997; La Jornada. Online. FBIS-LAT-97-116. 6 November 1997.

The Popular Revolutionary Army (known by their Spanish acronym, EPR), emerged publicly in July 1996, in Tepetixtla, Guerrero, a small town thirty miles north of Acapulco, by interrupting a ceremony commemorating the 1995 massacre of seventeen peasants by Guerrero police.[72] In August 1996, two weeks before President Zedillo's second State of the Union speech (15 September 1815), the EPR stunned the world by conducting coordinated attacks on military and government targets simultaneously in five different states. Unlike the Zapatistas, who present themselves as a band of poorly armed Indians from the same state, the EPR forces are recruited from around the country and appear to be well trained, organized, attired, and armed. It is rumored that they have received their funding from such illegal activities as the April 1994 kidnapping of Alfredo Harp Helú, the president of Banamex, the most powerful banking group in Mexico.[73] This kidnapping ransom alone netted US$ 30 million.[74] The EPR would be considered a disloyal opposition by Juan Linz because they advocate the overthrowing of the current PRI-led government and the installation of a socialist regime with a new constitution.[75]

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[72] Sam Dillon, "Shadowy Rebels Pose New Problems for Mexico," The New York Times, 17 July 1996, p. A3.

[73] David Luhnow, "Mexican Army Faces Tough Test with New Rebels," Reuters World Service, 31 August 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: Topnws. File: REUINT. 6 September 1996.

[74] "Wealthy Mexican Kidnapped," Associated Press, 26 August1997. Online. America Online. Daily News. 27 August 1997.

[75] Linz, op. cit., p. 28.

The army sent a reported three thousand troops to hunt for the subversives and occupy the towns that they had attacked. This amounts to a 500 percent increase in military presence in some parts of Guerrero.[76] In a move considered to be extremely controversial because of its constitutional implications, the army established roadblocks in eleven of thirty-two states.[77] Since the Constitution prohibits roadblocks during peace time, it could be argued that the government considered the country to be in a state of war. Numerous journalists echo public concern that the country is becoming a militarized state, given that troop deployments began in Chiapas in January 1994 to counter the Zapatistas, and in numerous other states in August 1996 to counter the EPR, and still continue up to today. The fact that in October 1996, troops were deployed outside of their barracks in twenty-nine of the thirty-one states definitely increases their visibility to the citizenry.[78] In the summer of 1997, the army started conducting social programs in Guerrero to "mask" their increased presence and justify their daily patrols.

Another use of the military under the DN-2 mission of defending the nation against internal threats would be the use of force to protect the political stability of the country. It can be argued that the use of the military for social control in times of political crisis serves the purpose of maintaining the status quo, which is synonymous with the PRI

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[76] Roberto Garduno E., "Armed Forces Guerrero Program Described," Mexico City La Jornada, 13 June 1997. Online. FBIS-LAT-97-121. 6 November 1997.

[77] "Mexico Army Increases Role," United Press International, 8 September 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: Topnws. File: UPI. 13 September 1996.

[78] Eduardo Molina y Vedia, "Mexico: Era of 'Militarization' Seen," Inter Press Service, 19 December 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Curnews. 11 February 1997.

party's entrenchment, particularly in a situation when there is a party-state identity. An early example of the army acting to maintain the status quo of the entrenched PRI party occurred during the 1952 presidential elections. The first non-military president, Miguel Alemán Valdés (1946-1952), had selected Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958) to succeed him, and Ruiz naturally won. General Miguel Henríquez Guzmán, the opposition candidate who had founded the Federated Party of the Mexican People (FPPM), lost the election. Partisans of the FPPM incited a riot in Mexico City and army troops were forced to subdue the rioters.[79]

In 1967 and 1968, students were protesting around the world against the cold war and for civil liberties. Mexican students and workers did the same throughout the summer of 1968, sometimes with sporadic violence, and they were often subdued with harsh governmental intervention. In October 1968, over ten thousand Mexican army troops and police forces were called in to subdue approximately six thousand student protesters. Unidentified snipers fired upon the governmental forces and the army opened fire on the unarmed student demonstrators in the Plaza de Tlatelolco, killing between twenty-five and five hundred people according to different estimates. The world press, in Mexico City for the upcoming 1968 Olympics, watched in horror.[80]

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[79] David F. Ronfeldt, "The Mexican Army and Political Order Since 1940," in Ronfeldt, op. cit., p. 64.

[80] The Mexican government's official estimate was three hundred fatalities. See Louis E.V. Nevaer, "Mexican Democracy Means Brokered Elections," The New York Times, 25 August 1990, p. A22. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: MAJPAP. 12 August 1996. See also, Wager, 1992, op. cit., pp. 316-317.

Another example occurred in March 1990 when armored vehicles filled with army troops rolled into Michoacán state to evict PRD opposition party protesters who had occupied seventeen city halls since local elections had been held three months earlier. The protesters from the leftist party claimed that the elections had been fraudulent in both Michoacán and in neighboring Guerrero state. Seven people were killed in Guerrero when local police evicted protesters who were also occupying city halls. The government decided to use federal troops in place of the police in Michoacán to avoid a repeat of the Guerrero bloodbath. Although the government did not openly admit to using soldiers during this episode, they were seen on national television. Having the army intervene in political disputes is a touchy subject for the Mexican government and people. Interior Minister Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios publicly stated that the "'federal presence' in Michoacán had been 'reinforced' to avoid violence on the part of the PRD."[81]

Armored personnel carriers once again rolled into Michoacán two years later, this time prior to the election. The July 1992 gubernatorial election was seen as a test for the PRI, so troops were sent to ensure a "fair" election was held in order to dispel any subsequent protests. The soldiers provided protection for election officials and polling places. It is interesting to note that hundreds of international election observers, including members from the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia, were allowed to witness the polls

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[81] Quoted in Candice Hughes, "Military Rolls Into Michoacán, Opposition Demonstrators Ousted," The Associated Press, 5 April 1990. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: Allwld. 12 August 1996.

and that fraud was still reported, even though the PRI was expected to win without any electoral manipulation.[82]

Army troops were put on full alert and mobilized to the capital city once again for an election; this time the 1994 presidential election. It was widely believed throughout Mexico that the presidential election held in 1988 was fraudulent. In 1988, the PRI-dominated Federal Election Commission (FEC) stated that the PRI candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, won with 50.36 percent of the vote while running against Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD: *Partido de la Revolución Democrática*) candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. However, during that election, army troops blocked opposition leaders from observing while the FEC secretly counted the ballots for three hours. Independent exit polls indicated that Cárdenas obtained more votes than did Salinas.[83] So in 1994, when Cárdenas was running again, this time against PRI candidate Ernesto Zedillo, soldiers beefed up security at Mexico City's national airport.

As a result of the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas state, the government reportedly began to purchase new equipment. This included new rifles, anti-riot vehicles, Black Hawk helicopters, and Humvees made in the United States. Even though the government claimed that these purchases were part of an overall military modernization plan, the true purpose for this equipment acquisition was to prepare for the anticipated unrest in the

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[82] Lisa Bransten, "Troops Sent on Eve of Elections," United Press International, 11 July 1992. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: Topnws. File: UPI. 12 August 1996.

[83] Concepcion Badillo, "Soldiers Block Opposition Deputies From Examining Disputed Ballots," The Associated Press, 23 August 1988. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: APOLIT. File: All. 12 August 1996.

wake of the 1994 elections.[84] This fear of unrest originated from threats made directly by PRD candidate Cárdenas. He announced prior to the election that "if there is fraud, we will not stand idly by. We will not return to our homes. Nobody will be able to oppose the people's mobilization. And the immediate civic resistance that will erupt to force them to respect the law."[85]

Army troops were used again later in 1994 to protect the oil and natural gas fields in the southern state of Tabasco against attack. The PRD political party claimed that the November 1994 local elections in Tabasco and Veracruz states, as well as the presidential elections held in August 1994, were fraudulent. The PRD threatened to disrupt oil production if the local election results weren't annulled. Tabasco and Veracruz not only provide the majority of Mexico's oil and natural gas, but the country's main refineries are also located there.[86]

National Defense Plan Three (DN-3) provides for the army's assistance during times of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and floods. Under this plan, the army also conducts civic action which it terms "social work." The national army has been conducting this type of work since the revolution. President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) envisioned the military as a nation building force. He considered this mission a

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[84] Linda Diebel, "Mexicans Brace for Election Violence: Troops on Alert as Voters Go to the Polls Today," The Toronto Star, 21 August 1994. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: All. 12 August 1996.

[85] Quoted in Ibid.

[86] Tim Coone, "Mexico: Mexican Army Defends Oilfields," Reuters Textline, 8 December 1994. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: TXTLNE. 12 August 1996.

means to keep the officers occupied and therefore unable to participate in politics. Cárdenas also planned to use the military scattered around the country as an opportunity to exert governmental control over the outlying states.[87]

The civic action conducted by the military has evolved since the revolution. Following the devastation caused by the revolution, the army repaired railroad and telegraph lines and constructed roads. After World War II, the military helped with the construction of regional airports. The army has also been the principal force since the 1930s in reforestation and fighting forest fires.

On the social side of civic action, the army has been involved with literacy training since the revolution and particularly during the 1940s and 1950s. The military has also provided medical and dental care to the population in the countryside and has taken care of livestock. In particular, it was the military that took control during the cattle hoof and mouth epidemic during the late 1940s. To prevent future plagues, the military began vaccinating cattle.

National Defense Plan Four (DN-4) allows the Mexican military to fight the war on drugs and will be addressed separately in the next section of this chapter. Here it should be noted that the military's participation in the drug war is supported by doctrine and is also adding to the internal use of the military.

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[87] Wager, 1992, op. cit., pp. 268-305.

C. THE DRUG WAR

Mexico's increased militarization of the "drug war" closely parallels that of the United States. The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, a forerunner to today's Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), first began operations in Mexico in 1961.[88] Although not officially acknowledged by the Mexican government, the two countries worked surprisingly well together for over two decades before the cooperation became publicized. It wasn't until the mid-1980s, when U.S. President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) stated that links existed between Latin American drug traffickers and communist guerrilla insurgents, that the "drug war" become a topic for public debate. "The President called trafficking and terrorism "twin evils," and claimed they represented 'the most insidious and dangerous threats to the hemisphere today.'"[89]

The 1986 U.S. National Security Decision Directive (NSDD)-221 transformed international drug trafficking from a purely law enforcement issue into an official national security threat. This enabled the Reagan administration to include all cabinet secretaries and their respective departments, as well as the CIA and the National Security Agency, in an unified effort to combat the flow of drugs. Reagan's war on drugs included using the military to plan large scale operations, collect intelligence, and work with foreign militaries. To encourage foreign governments to turn the drug threat into a "war" in their

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[88] Kate Doyle, "The Militarization of the Drug War in Mexico," Current History, Vol. 92, No. 571 (February 1993), 83-88.

[89] Ibid., p. 85.

respective countries, NSDD-221 quoted a CIA National Intelligence Estimate which stated, "Powerful trafficking organizations can corrupt and undermine political, social, and security institutions within democratic nations."[90] The United States chose to attack the drug problem as a supply and not as a demand problem, which provided the impetus to grant military aid in the means of arms and training to foreign militaries in Latin America. Also in 1986, the U.S. Congress passed legislation requiring the President to officially certify foreign governments' cooperation in combating the international drug war.

The South Florida Task Force, which had been created in 1981, produced a problem which had devastating affects on Mexico. It successfully interdicted the flow of drugs through the Caribbean Sea, which prompted South American drug cartels to begin shipping drugs through Mexico. Today, 70 percent of all drugs entering the United States come through Mexico.[91]

Mexico, which had been historically against military cooperation with the United States and had rarely publicly discussed national security concerns, eventually accepted President Reagan's fear of the drug threat. In 1987, President Miguel de la Madrid became the first Mexican president to acknowledge the drug issue as a national security threat.[92] Even more significant is the rewording of the five year National Development

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[90] Ibid., p. 83.

[91] Linda Robinson, "An Inferno Next Door," U.S. News and World Report. 24 February 1997, pp. 36-39.

[92] Maria Celia Toro, "Drug Trafficking From a National Security Perspective," in Bruce Michael Bagley and Sergio Aguayo Quezada (editors), Mexico: In Search of Security (Miami, FL: University of Miami North-South Center, 1993), pp. 317-333.

Plan (NDP) under President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994). NDP 1983-88 stated that due to the changing world "the armed forces have been transformed so that their strictly military original role has been recast to include growing activities related to the well-being of the community," and NDP 1989-94 specifically included using the military to counter drug trafficking.[93]

During the presidencies of both Salinas and Zedillo, the army greatly increased its role and missions to absorb much of the drug enforcement responsibilities from other law enforcement agencies. The NDP and DN-4 has allowed the Mexican military to legally accept these new missions.

The Mexican army has received 73 UH-1H helicopters and 4 C-26 Fairchild observation aircraft from the United States through the Military Foreign Assistance (MFA) program to increase their ability to eradicate drug producing fields and to pursue drug traffickers. Of the US$ 112 million worth of military equipment and training that President Clinton allocated to Latin American countries in 1996, Mexico received US$ 37 million.[94]

"Mexico is carrying out its war on drugs literally – with its army...Many critics worry about the implications."[95] The army has been tasked to eradicate poppy fields and

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[93] Quoted in Luis Herrera-Lasso and Gaudalupe Gonzalez, "Reflections on the Use of the Concept of National Security in Mexico," in Bagley and Aguayo, op. cit., p. 349.

[94] "Mexico to get U.S. Choppers for Drug War," Reuters Online News Service, 25 September 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: Topnws. File: REUINT. 6 October 1996.

[95] Lucia Newman, "Mexico Sends its Army to Fight its War on Drugs," CNN Transcript #29-6, 15 November 1995. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: Allwld. 12 August 1996.

marijuana crops. When asked on CNN why the army was going beyond its original mission of eradication by increasing its role in interdiction, Colonel Alajandro Daniels, the army officer in charge of interdicting drug traffickers in Guerrero state, replied: "We know these missions are supposed to be handled by the federal police, but our constitution says that when the police is incompetent for a task that affects national security, the president can use the armed forces."[96] The army is currently devoting up to fifteen thousand troops (or 12 percent of its total force) to combat drugs. The Autonomous University of Mexico conducted a study which indicated that drug cartels operating in the country take in some US$ 15 billion to US$ 30 billion a year, of which nearly US$ 0.8 billion is invested in bribes to authorities.[97] After the state's assistant attorney-general was arrested in April 1994, the governor of Baja California, home to the powerful Tijuana drug cartel, admitted that state, federal, and judicial officials in his state were deeply involved in the narcotics trade.[98]

Due to the prevalent problem of corruption, Army troops are now filling vacancies in law enforcement agencies. Most special drug units in the capital city and Tijuana are manned by federal troops, as they are in the states of Sinoloa and Baja California, two

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[96] Quoted in Ibid.

[97] Diego Cevallos, "Mexico: Harsh New Anti-Crime Laws Spark Opposition," Inter Press Service, 31 October 1995. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: Allwld. 12 August 1996.

[98] Harry Sterling, "Mexican Bloodshed Reveals New Crisis: Drug Anarchy Could Follow Weakening of PRI's Iron Control," The Toronto Star, 7 October 1994. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: Allwld. 12 August 1996.

U.S. border states that see the majority of trafficking.[99] In 1996, nearly the entire drug enforcement apparatus came under military control. Some eight hundred individuals within the structure of the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic (PGR), including many members of the Federal Judicial Police (PJF), were purged for suspicion of corruption and links to drug cartels.[100] Another five hundred have been purged during the first three months of 1997.

President Zedillo appointed Jorge Madrazo Cuéllar as Attorney General in December 1996, who then appointed three army generals to head the PJF, the Center for the Planning of Drug Control and the National Counternarcotics Institute (INCD). The three generals were asked to purge their organizations of corrupt personnel, replace them with military officers, and then train them to create elite units to combat organized crime. They were also told to create a National Intelligence Program to share information on known drug traffickers.[101]

General Jesús Gutiérrez Rebollo, who had been appointed to head the INCD in early December 1996, lasted only eight weeks in his new position as Mexico's drug czar. He was arrested on charges of corruption and national treason for allegedly accepting

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[99] "Mexican Troops to Baja California," Associated Press, 21 February 1997. Online. America Online. Daily News. 21 February 1997.

[100] "New Attorney General Announces Restructuring of Department," La Jornada, 14 December 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: Topnws. File: REUINT. (translated by BBC for Reuters). 12 January 1997.

[101] Juan Manuel Venegas and Jesús Aranda, "Fight Against Drug Trafficking Under Army Control," La Jornada, 27 December 1996. Online. FBIS-LAT-97-003. 6 November 1997.

millions of dollars in bribes from one of the world's most notorious drug barons.[102] Mexico appointed a civilian lawyer, Mariano Herrán Salvatti, to be the new commissioner of the INCD and Attorney General Madrazo implemented new screening procedures for all PGR personnel and assigned military officers, which include polygraph, medical, and psychological testing. The INCD was abolished in April 1997 by presidential decree and replaced by the Special Prosecutor's Office to Deal with Crimes against Health. As the arrest of General Gutiérrez indicates, merely replacing corrupt civilians with army personnel does not eradicate the root problem of corruption.

D. POLITICAL CORRUPTION

In referring to the use of the military during times of political crisis, it can be argued that their actions serve one of two purposes: either to maintain the status quo, which we have already seen, or to fill a power vacuum, that is a position which is vacant due to the perception that it was illegitimately held or corrupted.

Overall, 1994 was a year of chaos, uprisings, economic crisis, and rising crime for Mexico. The Zapatistas attacked on New Year's day and the following weeks were consumed by political negotiations and the need to combat the economic fallout. Then on 24 March, a lone gunman with a .38 caliber pistol walked up to the PRI presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, while he was campaigning in a shantytown outside

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[102] General Gutiérrez has been charged with accepting money, cars and homes over a seven year period from Amado Carillo Fuentes, the leader of the Juarez drug smuggling cartel. See Julia Preston, "A General in Mexico's Drug War Is Dismissed on Narcotics Charges," New York Times, March 19, 1997, p. A1.

Tijuana, and shot him once in the head while he was standing and then again in the stomach after he fell to the ground. The shooter, Mario Aburto, was immediately captured, and as he was being pulled through the enraged crowd, he shouted "I have saved Mexico."[103] This represents the mixed feelings of Mexicans about the ruling party. Colosio advocated change and reform. The old PRI hard-liners, or *dinosaurios,* refused to accept change and were rumored to have dictated his assassination. Another rumor was that the drug cartels, which may have been linked to the PRI, ordered his killing.[104]

One month later, Alberto Harp Helú, the president of the most powerful banking group in Mexico, Banamex, was kidnapped. This became significant later when it was revealed that this incident provided the funding for the EPR insurgency. Six weeks later another high profile kidnapping rocked the Mexican press, this time the son of a large, corporate executive. Then on 28 September, the general secretary of the PRI party and former governor of Guerrero, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, was assassinated in Mexico City.

The murder of Ruiz became significant because it began to unravel the puzzle that surrounds the relationship between the PRI party, the government, and the military. There is still great uncertainty surrounding Ruiz's murder. It is not known whether the murder was politically motivated or ordered by drug barons as a warning to Mexican officials

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[103] Tom Masland, "Murder in Mexico," Newsweek, 4 April 1994. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Mags. 12 August 1996.

[104] Noel Lorthiois, "Mexico's Ruling Party Says Good Riddance to Bad Year," Agence France Presse, 15 December 1994. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: Allwld. 12 August 1996.

responsible for the government's anti-drug efforts. The mere fact that anyone would dare murder such a high ranking ruling party official indicates just how unstable the situation in Mexico had become. The murder raises questions about the pervasive drug trade in Mexico and the involvement of corrupt Mexican officials, including members of the PRI, as well as the Mexican military, and police.[105]

The Mexican military has become involved in these scandals for two different, but somewhat similar reasons. First, DN-4, the newest National Defense Plan, mandates their involvement in the war on drugs. Second, they have taken over law enforcement functions from various local police units. This is due to police inability to be effective and more directly is a result of the police corruption and infiltration by the drug cartels. The result is that the army is responsible for tracking down criminals and drug traffickers, many of whom are reputed to be linked to the PRI political party, who are the civilian commanders of the military.

President Zedillo appointed Ruiz's brother, Mario Ruiz Massieu, as Deputy Attorney General and placed him in charge of investigating his brother's assassination. Mario Ruiz, however, eventually resigned his post, alleging that high officials within the PRI and government were interfering with his investigation. Rumors abound in Mexico that he was getting too close to the truth behind the connections between the party and the

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[105] Harry Sterling, op. cit.

drug cartels. He also was making public comments about the connection of his brother's murder to the murder of Colosio.[106]

All of this imparts the feeling that the PRI-led government has lost its ability to co-opt and absorb opposition, both internal and external to the party. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish the difference, but it is at these occurrences where military intervention and assignment to new roles and missions could be interpreted as filling a position created due to a power vacuum. Although it currently appears unlikely that the military would be willing to intervene overtly in the country's political affairs to rule directly, it is apparent that they are being tasked to fulfill new roles.

President Zedillo has not been timid to reform what he perceives to be flawed. He acted to correct the country's economic problems, and has also been tinkering with the law enforcement issues. In October 1995, he proposed a new national security system for police-military control. He received PRI backing in congress to create a new security apparatus where the military would have special powers. The proposal placed all existing law enforcement agencies and the armed forces under the combined coordination of the executive branch.[107]

This increased use of the military has not gone unnoticed by the opposition. Leaders of the PRD party have complained that President Zedillo has expanded the role of

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[106] "Political Reform Must be President Zedillo's Priority," Latin American Regional Reports: Mexico and NAFTA Report, 8 December 1994, RM-94-12, p. 1. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: Allwld. 12 August 1996.

[107] Cevallos, op. cit.

the military to combat common crime and political disturbances in southern states such as Chiapas and Tabasco.[108] However, this did not stop the president from praising the army during its 83rd anniversary celebration in stating that "In these times of intense economic, political and social changes, the Mexican army has maintained itself as a solid pillar of legality."[109] He went on to thank them for their loyalty and for fulfilling their "institutional" mission.

Four months later, in June 1996, President Zedillo declared crime the biggest problem facing the capital city and appointed a top army general to head the police force. Following the economic crisis of late 1994 and the following spring, the crime rate soared over 35 percent in Mexico City. Then in May 1996, riot police violently subdued striking school teachers as they were marching. This prompted the firing of the police chief and the appointment of army General Enrique Salgado Cordero as his replacement. In public opinion polls conducted in the capital, the Mexican army receives a higher level of respect than does the police force, which is considered to be filled with corruption.[110]

Soon after being appointed as head of the Public Security Secretariat (SSP) for the Federal District (his new title), General Salgado fired key civilian personnel and appointed another twenty-five generals and colonels to fill their positions on the capital's police

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[108] "Zedillo Praises Mexican Army as 'Pillar of Legality,'" Reuters World Service, 9 February 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World: File: TXTLNE. 12 August 1996.

[109] Ibid.

[110] "Mexico City's Worst Problem is Crime, Zedillo Says," Reuters World Service, 10 June 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: World. File: TXTLNE. 12 August 1996.

force. Nine months later, the number of military officers in key positions had grown to ninety-two and the police force was augmented with three thousand combat soldiers to help patrol the streets. Another program instituted by General Salgado under President Zedillo's encouragement is the retraining of police officers.[111]

This training program sends civilian police officers to Military Field Number One, a base just outside the capital, where they undergo three months of extensive military training before being sent back to their posts. While all personnel from a given police district undergo this training, additional military combat soldiers assume their duties on the capital's streets. Nearly six thousand police officers have been trained so far in 1997, which means that just as many soldiers have been required to fill their vacant posts.[112]

Opinion on this militarization of Mexico City's police force varies. Critics from the two opposition political parties call President Zedillo's program unconstitutional. However, the Mexican Supreme Court approved the use of the military personnel to help combat crime. Tulane professor Roderic Camp, a leading expert on Mexican politics and the military, warns Mexican leaders that they are "sending a message to your citizens that civilian leadership is incapable of resolving these problems, and needs the military. It

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[111] Alfredo Joyner and Jorge Arturo Hidalgo, "General Defends Military's Security Role," Mexico City Reforma, 1 April 1997. Online. FBIS #97L10101A. 6 November 1997. Also Bertha Teresa Ramirez and Mirian Posada, "Mexico: Talks on Military Role in Capital Planned," La Jornada, 9 July 1997. Online. FBIS-LAT-97-198. 6 November 1997.

[112] Matthew Brayman, "Critics Slam Militarization; Initiative Evokes Angry Response," Worldsources Online, Inc. Emerging Markets Datafile. 6 March 1997 Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Curnews. 6 November 1997.

won't take long before the military is just as compromised as the police."[113] In contrast, both citizens and business owners prefer the use of the soldiers because they perceive this cuts down on crime in the city.

There are numerous examples of the resort to military officers to fill key civilian posts throughout Mexico. An army general commands the police in the southern state of Tabasco, which is troubled by PRD protesters that threaten disruption of the oil industry. Two other army generals took over the administration of two airports outside of Mexico City in January 1997 when it was discovered that the airports were being used to transship illicit narcotics. In April 1997, an army Lieutenant Colonel assumed command of the Federal Judicial Police office at Nuevo León in the state of Monterrey and militarized the post by using one hundred soldiers to augment the fifty civilian officers.

Elsewhere in the country, military units conduct duties normally assigned to civilians. On the northern border in Ciudad Juarez, a key crossing point of cocaine and other illegal drugs entering the United States, soldiers wear civilian clothes while conducting anti-narcotics efforts for the federal police. The military also conducts anti-drug operations in Guadalajara, Mexico's second largest city and home to many of the country's smuggling gangs.[114]

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[113] David Luhnow, "Mexico Military Steps from Shadows to Fight Drugs," Reuter News Service, 5 December 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Curnews. 26 August 1997.

[114] Althaus, op. cit.

It is evident that the government of Mexico is losing confidence in the local police personnel and public administrators and utilizes army officers and troops to fill these vacated positions. Unfortunately, this is no longer a combination of isolated occurrences. The militarization of Mexico is an ongoing trend that is beginning to pervade all segments of its civil society and may have a significant and negative impact on the democratic reforms that President Zedillo is also attempting to implement. This in turn may create national security concerns for the United States. These issues will be analyzed in the next chapter.

V. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

A. PRELUDE

The previous chapter discussed the independent variables of internally-focused doctrine, the drug war, and corruption and presented substantive evidence to prove that all three are contributing to the increased use of the military in Mexico, resulting in the militarization of its society. In addition to this militarization one can observe two simultaneous phenomena: President Zedillo's attempts at democratic liberalization and the loss of hegemony by the ruling PRI political party. The introductory chapter speculated about the combination of this increased militarization with these future political uncertainties. This chapter will analyze the results of the most recent elections held in Mexico and speculate on future election results. It will also speculate on the future state of civil-military relations in Mexico and discuss the national security implications and related policy recommendations for the United States.

B. ELECTION RESULTS

Chapter III of this thesis discussed how the revolutionary generals turned politicians created the political party that today is the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI: *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*). That party maintained absolute hegemonic control of the country for six decades. Opposition parties have always existed in Mexico with the PRI's qualified support to provide a resemblance of electoral competition.

However, beginning in 1989, when the right-of-center National Action Party (PAN: *Partido de Acción Nacional*) won the gubernatorial election of Baja California, the opposition parties have been gaining public support and winning elections.

The Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD: *Partido de la Revolución Democrática*) was formed by combining numerous fractional left-of-center parties that had competed for seventy years. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, son of President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), became the PRD national candidate. He had run against Carlos Salinas de Gortari (president: 1988-1994) and lost by the closest margin in PRI history. As discussed in Chapter IV, many people in and outside Mexico believe that Cárdenas actually won the election but that Salinas assumed the office due to PRI supported fraud. Cárdenas lost to President Zedillo in 1994 in a reportedly fairer election.

The 6 July 1997, election provides what most pundits agree is the biggest indication of how democratic reforms in Mexico will proceed in the future. The mayor of the capital city has always been a presidential appointee and therefore a staunch PRI supporter. In July 1997, the position of mayor was put to a general election for the first time in history. Cárdenas, running on the PRD ticket, won the mayoral position by a two-to-one margin over his PRI opponent. This places him directly in charge of over nine million city inhabitants and indirectly in charge of nearly twenty-two million people who reside in the capital city suburbs. More important, this electoral victory provides Cárdenas with a bully-pulpit from which to influence the largest concentrated block of voters in the country in time for the next presidential election to be held in July 2000.

There were also six gubernatorial elections held in July 1997, with the PRI maintaining control of four and the PAN winning two. It is estimated that well over 70 percent of Mexico's population is now under the leadership and political control of either the PRD or PAN at the state and local level. This has proved to have a profound influence upon voters when they go to the polls to select their national leaders.

A striking example of this increasing political pluralism in Mexico is the loss of PRI hegemony in their lower house of congress, the House of Deputies. The house has five hundred seats of which three hundred are filled by direct election and the remaining 200 are allocated by proportional representation. A political party must obtain at least 42 percent of the vote to claim an absolute majority. For the first time in sixty-eight years, the PRI failed to win more than 40 percent of the vote. The PAN and the PRD also failed to win a majority, but their combined 52 percent of the vote and four week's worth of debate produced for the first time in history a Speaker of the House coming from the PRI opposition.

The PRI obtained 39 percent of the congressional vote, which combined with their proportional allotment gave them 239 seats (48 percent) in the House of Deputies. The PAN and PRD each won roughly 26 percent of the congressional vote. Due to proportional allotment in different districts, the PRD ended up with 125 seats, the PAN with 121 seats and the remaining fifteen seats went to the Labor and Green parties.[115]

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[115] John Rice, "Mexican Ruling Party Losses Support," AOL News Service, 29 August 1997. Online. America Online. 29 August 1997. Also Bill Cormier, "Mexico Hears State-of-Union Address," AOL News Service, 02 August 1997. Online. America Online. 2 August 1997.

One deputy elected as a PRI candidate has since shifted allegiance to the PRD. Opposition deputies debated for four weeks and finally reached a quorum, selecting Porfirio Muñoz Ledo from the PRD to be the speaker of the house. This enabled him to present a rebuttal to the President's State of the Nation speech on 1 September 1997. It was the first time in history that an opposition member was allowed to do so.[116]

In the Senate, the upper house of congress, thirty-two of 128 seats were up for a vote in July 1997. The PRI maintains a seventy-seven to fifty-one majority which when combined with the lower house gives the PRI an overall advantage of 315 to 313. This loss of PRI hegemony leads to the assumption that there will be more compromise and negotiation, if not open debate and confrontation in the legislative process.

An even newer process for the legislation is the questioning of Cabinet secretaries on their policies. This is an attempt to emulate the power of the United States congress and a move designed to raise the image of the Mexican congress from one of a rubber-stamp organization to one that wields the political power of the represented people. Attorney General Jorge Madrazo was the first Cabinet member questioned. He spent five hours explaining the policies of the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic (PGR). Another obvious concern for both the President's cabinet and the military is that the House of Deputies has the "power of the purse." In the future, it can be expected that the Mexican congress will pattern itself more after the United States and assume both

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[116] Anita Snow, "Mexico Congress: A Sign of Change," AOL News Service, 2 August 1997. Online. America Online. 2 August 1997.

investigative and policy approval procedures. This will certainly make politics in Mexico less predictable in the future.

What does this mean for the future of democratic reforms in Mexico? Merely looking at the results of the most recent election, the first ever mayoral race of the capital and the House of Deputies, one could be reasonably over-optimistic. The PRI has lost its congressional hegemony and now the opposition has the opportunity to question all that the ruling PRI president does. The lower house of congress controls the budget and can allocate funds to dictate their policy priorities. And finally, the PRD mayor-elect of Mexico City is sitting in the best seat available from which to run for president in the year 2000.

Now a word of caution. Although the Mexican constitution prescribes a government divided into three branches with balancing powers, the system has always been one where the president wields all the power. Most Latin American constitutions have these provisions, copied from the United States, but in practice the president has always been very powerful. And the president is still from the PRI. Even though the House of Deputies is controlled by the opposition, the Senate is still controlled by the ruling party. This is the first time in history that the different houses of congress have been controlled by different parties and no one yet knows how the power play will unfold.

It would be reckless to predict that Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas will be the Mexican president in 2000, or that any opposition candidate will win the presidential election. It is too soon to reasonably speculate on that outcome. The Mexican system of patronage and the influence of the PRI may be enough to maintain the presidency even when faced with a

vocal opposition in congress. However, based on worldwide democratic trends, the influence of political watch groups such as the Carter Center, and the increasing voice of the Mexican citizen, one can predict that democratic liberalization and political reform will continue to prosper in Mexico.

C. FUTURE CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Political reform does not necessarily entail reduced use of the military in Mexican society. Mexico has always been militarized. This is due to the fact that both the PRI and the military were formed by revolutionary generals. The Mexican government has always harnessed the manpower and organizational skills of the military to implement programs away from the urban capital and to control unruly segments of the society. What is new today is the extent of militarization of Mexican society.

What I hope is clear from reading this thesis is an awareness of the extent of that increasing militarization. Today, the military in Mexico is being tasked to conduct missions and fulfill roles that are entirely new and that pervade all segments of civil society. It is comparatively much easier to increase gradually the use of the military than it is to suddenly stop using the military in non-traditional roles. The fear then is what will happen to civil-military relations during this democratic reform process? There are two possible and contradictory outcomes.

First, the pessimistic view. The military is closely tied to the PRI-led government and has even been called the "armed wing of the party." Many observers of the Mexican political scene worry that the military will be forced to or even voluntarily intervene in

politics to ensure the sustained hegemony of the PRI government.[117] This could be a result of the Mexican military officer being simultaneously professional and politicized, as Alfred Stepan explains in his theory of the "new professional."[118] Increased public violence and lawlessness could therefore prompt the interventionist tendencies of the military. Finally, both force structure and military budget have increased during the past decade under the PRI-led government and the military may not be willing to suffer the consequences of a future left-leaning PRD government.

To counter with the optimistic viewpoint, I believe the military will remain neutral in politics and will not intervene on the behalf of any particular political party. Evidence to support this assumption includes the large numbers of generals and admirals who have publicly shifted allegiance from the PRI to the PRD this past election year.[119] This is also based upon the military's loyalty to the constitution and their dislike for past interventions, such as the 1968 Plaza de Tlatelolco fiasco. Senior military officers have publicly voiced this loyalty several times during the past few years. National Defense Secretary General Cervantes specifically stated after this year's elections that the military's loyalty would

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[117] Two Mexican experts, Tulane University Professor Roderic Camp and Georgetown University Professor John Bailey, are interviewed in Mark Fineman, "Analysts Troubled by Growing Military Presence," The News, 11 February 1997. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Allwld. 26 August 1997.

[118] Stepan, 1973, op. cit.

[119] Ten retired flag officers and one active duty naval officer publicly shifted their party affiliation. See "Mexican Ex-military Officers Join Opposition," Reuter Textline, 14 January 1997. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Curnews. 26 August 1997.

nourish the democratic process. However, the fact that the military refuses to intervene in politics does not automatically indicate that Mexico will become demilitarized.

Unfortunately, using the military in civil society has become a necessary evil. When faced with the specter of lawlessness, violent crime, and corruption, the Mexican public and business leaders overwhelmingly support the use of the military in non-traditional roles and even as a substitute for civilian leadership. Therefore, to facilitate the demilitarization of Mexico, the root causes of the problem need to be corrected. This of course is much easier said than done.

The overriding problem is one of orientation and doctrine. According to the Organic Law and the National Defense Plans, Mexico's military is primarily directed towards internal political threats, such as combating the drug war and assisting in nation building. To demilitarize, Mexico will need to reorient the military in accordance with Huntington's theory of objective civilian control. This will entail assigning external defense missions to the military and allowing the military to train for that mission.

To demilitarize Mexican society, the government must force the military to relinquish the numerous law enforcement positions it occupies. The government must also create or reorganize civilian law enforcement and judicial agencies. This will be no easy task considering that many criminal prosecutors are incompetent and that 30 percent of the judges are estimated to be in the pockets of the narco-traffickers. For justice to prevail in Mexico, the government will have to recivilianize the police forces and also implement meaningful judicial reform. Mayor-elect Cárdenas is already making progress

by requesting the resignation of all military officers serving in a law enforcement billet in the capital city.

The disbandment of the National Counternarcotics Institute (INCD) and its replacement with the Special Prosecutor's Office to Deal with Crimes against Health is a step forward in the demilitariztion of the "drug war." Mexico must not only remove the military from the process, but must also de-emphasize the idea that it is a "war." Instead, the emphasis must be placed on law enforcement, public health, and education. The United States would also benefit from this paradigm shift.

I would now like to address the issues raised in the introduction of this thesis. It is undeniable that the visibility of the military in Mexico has drastically increased during the past few years and that this increased visibility translates into the militarization of the society. However, this increased visibility does not necessarily translate into increased military influence in the Mexican political system. It would also be erroneous to argue that the militarization of politics will have a de-stabilizing influence on the Mexican political system. Political instability in Mexico is a result of a combination of many factors: the two ongoing guerrilla insurgencies, the corruption and violence associated with narco-traffickers, the unpredictable economy, social inequality, and the uncertainty caused by recent democratic reforms. It is this political instability and its root causes that are forcing the Mexican government to militarize the society. Mexico must find a non-military solution to its problems. The United States may be able to help. In the final section of this thesis, I propose some policy recommendations to assist the demilitarization of Mexico.

D. SUGGESTED POLICY FOR THE UNITED STATES

Before he left his post in July 1997, U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, James Jones, stated that the number one problem in Mexico was the social and economic inequality. He feared that this inequality would breed serious problems and that they would spill over into the United States. Mexican professor Lorenzo Meyer commenting on the ambassador's thoughts, argues that the United States has a history of backing the PRI political party but that the PRI is no longer providing political and economic stability for its citizens.[120] Therefore, the United States must do two things to prevent this spillover of problems. It must support the democratic reform in Mexico without favoring any one particular political party and it must continue to promote economic growth as it does with the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA).

To help Mexico demilitarize the "drug war," the United States must also de-emphasize the "war" aspect of the problem. We must remember that the root cause of the problem is the over abundant demand from the United States consumer and not the supply that transships through Mexico. The U.S. government must also discontinue the certification process. This process only sends mixed signals to Mexico, spreads hate and discontent within our own government and between our government and Mexico's. We must refrain from asking the Mexicans to do what we are not willing to do ourselves.

United States "drug czar," General Barry McCaffrey, opposed presidential candidate Robert Dole's call for increased U.S. Army participation in the anti-drug effort.

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[120] Lorenzo Meyer, "Dollars, the PRI, and the Ambasador," Reforma, 12 December 1996. Online. LEXIS-NEXIS. Library: News. File: Curnews. 26 August 1997.

According to General McCaffrey, the increased U.S. military involvement in the "drug war" would have serious national security and civil-military relations implications for the United States.[121] However, on numerous occasions, McCaffrey has encouraged the use of the Mexican military to stem the flow of illicit narcotics and praised them as one of the most efficient anti-drug units in the world. We cannot promote such a double standard. If it is wrong for the U.S. military to participate in anti-drug efforts, then it is also wrong for the Mexican military to do so. Rather than sending military aid to Mexico to help militarize the "drug war," the U.S. government would be better off sending aid for criminal justice reform in order to help train civilian law enforcement officers on how to capture and prosecute narco-traffickers.

Finally, to help professionalize the Mexican military, it is correct to encourage joint military training in the future. This will help to reorient the Mexican military away from internal missions towards more traditional external missions. However, the U.S. government should proceed with caution. The Mexican public protested fiercely when first notified of these proposed military exchanges. The U.S. government and military must take their time, present to their counterparts the merits and potential benefits of the joint operations, and then allow the Mexican government to educate its citizens and change public opinion. Mexico and the United States are forever locked into a complex interdependent relationship. Whatever we do to assist each other will reap benefits in both countries.

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[121] Carlos Montemayor, "One More Mission for the Armed Forces?" La Jornada, 25 February 1997. Online. FBIS-LAT-97-040. 6 November 1997.

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